A SUPPLEMENT TO International Commerce

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MARKET FOR U. S. PRODUCTS IN Belgium

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A Supplement to

International Commerce

BELGIUM

a market for U.S. products

By Robert H. Walker

Bureau of International Commerce

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Luther H. Hodges, Secretary

Jack N. Behrman
Assistant Secretary for Domestic and International Business

Eugene M. Braderman
Director, Bureau of International Commerce

Robert H. Walker has been with the U.S. Department of Commerce as an International Economist since 1942. He is presently the Belgium-Luxembourg Desk Officer in the Office of International Regional Economics. Mr. Walker holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in Foreign Service from the School of Foreign Service and the Graduate School, Georgetown University.

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Foreword

Four billion dollars a year is spent by Belgium on imports. United States exporters share in that market to the extent of $375 million—about 9 percent. These rounded figures are representative but the point is clear. There is a rich and highly competitive market in Belgium for the aggressive U.S. exporter.

Belgium is, moreover, a growing market.

This book introduces you to the Belgian market. It provides general marketing information on the country, guidance on prospects for sales of selected commodities of special interest, and related material essential to the U.S. businessman preparing to sell goods in Belgium.

For decades Belgium has been one of the great trading nations following an historically liberal trading policy. And for a long time Belgium has been an important customer of the United States.

Friendship between our two countries is traditional and U.S. products long have been popular with the Belgian people.

They enjoy one of the world's highest living standards, which, like ours, is based on a private enterprise economy.

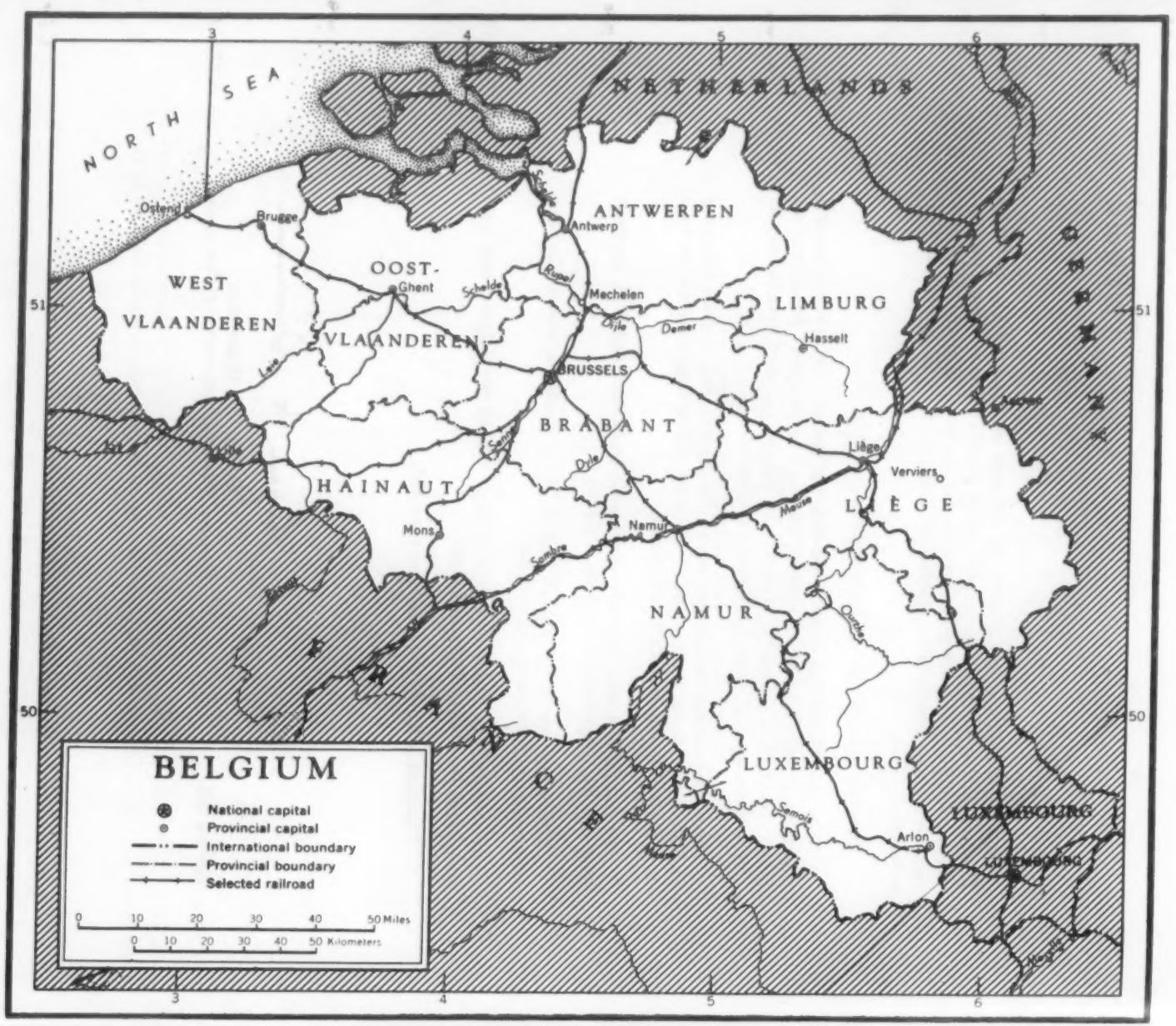
But more than $3 billion still is spent abroad by the Belgians each year somewhere else than in the United States.

This book will help you to tap that potential.

Eugene M. Braderman

EUGENE M. BRADERMAN
Director, Bureau of International Commerce

February 1963.


NORTH SEA
NETHERLANDS
Ostend
Bruges
Scheldt
ANTWERPEN
Antwerp
OOST-
VLAANDEREN
Ghent
Schelde
Rupel
Mechelen
WEST
VLAANDEREN
Lys
Dijle
Demer
LIMBURG
Hasselt
BRUSSELS
Aachen
BRABANT
Sambre
Dijle
Liège
Verviers
HAINAUT
Mons
Meuse
LIÈGE
Namur
Sambre
Escaut
NAMUR
Ourthe
LUXEMBOURG
Semois
Arlon
LUXEMBOURG
Meuse
Moselle
BELGIUM
National capital
Provincial capital
International boundary
Provincial boundary
Selected railroad
0 10 20 30 40 50 Miles
0 10 20 30 40 50 Kilometers

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BELGIUM —— MARK

- **POPULATION:** *9,229,000 (December 31, 1961); 784 per square mile.*
- **AREA:** *11,775 square miles, slightly larger than Maryland.*
- **LANGUAGE:** *Flemish in northern and western Belgium; French in the south and east. Brussels is bilingual.*
- **CHIEF CITIES:** *Five principal cities account for about two-fifths of total population (December 31, 1961). Brussels, capital and largest metropolitan area, 1,437,756; Antwerp, 873,052; Liège, 609,146; Charleroi, 466,494; and Ghent, 461,115.*
- **GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT:** *$12.16 billion, OEEC estimate, 1960 at current market prices.*
- **MOTOR VEHICLES REGISTERED:** *1,134,595 of which 935,638 were private automobiles; motorcycles, scooters, etc., not included (August 1, 1962).*
- **RADIOS AND TELEVISION SETS:** *2,612,850 radios and 820,709 television sets (licensed as of December 31, 1961). Broadcasting is Government monopoly.*
- **TELEPHONES:** *One for each 8 persons. Over 90% of telephones equipped for countrywide automatic dialing. Total subscribers, 823,643 (December 31, 1961).*
- **ELECTRICITY:** *1,605 kilowatt-hours consumed per capita (1961). Characteristics vary according to city: 110/220, 220/440, 50 cycles d.c.; 110/220, 220/380, 50 cycles a.c.*
- **COMMUNICATIONS:** *6,200 miles of Government highways, and 25,000 to 30,000 miles of other roads and streets; 2,928 miles of railways—551 electrified; 983 miles inland waterways. Major international airports at Brussels and Antwerp.*

MARKET INDICATORS

■ **EXCHANGE RATE:** *Official currency is the Belgian franc (1 franc = US$0.02). Official and free markets. Official market rate maintained between 49.625 and 50.375 francs per dollar. In free market all currencies negotiated at freely fluctuating rates.*

■ **ECONOMY:** *Predominantly industrial and relying highly on foreign trade. Belgium, poor in natural resources except coal, imports raw materials for processing and manufacture for reexport. Economic life based on private enterprise. Major industries: Iron and steel, nonferrous metals, metal manufactures, glass, textiles, diamond cutting, and chemicals. Coal production, 21.5 million tons in 1961.*

Agriculture characterized by very small farms and intensive cultivation, occupying about 10% of total population. Agricultural income accounted for about 5% of national income in 1960. Main crops: Wheat, sugar beets, coarse grains, flax, and hops. Livestock production is most important sector of agriculture.

■ **FOREIGN TRADE:**

	1959	1960	1961
	[Millions of dollars]		
Total imports (c.i.f.)	3,442	3,957	4,219
Total exports (f.o.b.)	3,295	3,775	3,924
Imports from United States (c.i.f.)	325	391	375
Exports to United States (f.o.b.)	436	358	361

■ **PRINCIPAL IMPORTS FROM UNITED STATES:** *Grains and grain preparations, nonelectric machinery, automobiles and other vehicles, cotton, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals.*

■ **PRINCIPAL EXPORTS TO UNITED STATES:** *Iron and steel, diamonds, glass, nonferrous metals, and textile products including carpets.*

City Hall, Grande Place, Brussels.

Courtesy Belgian Tourist Bureau

CHAPTER I

Scope and Nature of the Market

THE BELGIAN MARKET is a sophisticated one. Belgians are quality conscious and are willing to pay well for high-grade merchandise representing sound value—an attitude which applies to industrial products as well as to consumer items. In general, American goods have a strong appeal and enjoy a good reputation in Belgium.

Belgium ranks high among the major foreign customers of the United States, and bright possibilities exist in this important market for expanding sales of American products.

Belgium's governmental system is strong and securely founded on democratic traditions. Economic life is based on private enterprise with little Government intervention. These factors permit the Belgian business community to operate in a competitive society, not unlike that in the United States.

The country's businessmen are enterprising and experienced in the intricacies of foreign trade. Belgium's location and excellent transportation system make it most attractive as a distribution center for Western Europe.

The country is experiencing an extended period of prosperity. The gross national product has been growing at an annual rate of about 3 percent during the past few years. Industrial activity is high and has followed a general uptrend. The influx of foreign investment continues to accelerate, stimulating industrial production and bringing new processes and products for domestic consumption and export. With few exceptions, labor relations have been good and unemployment low. Foreign trade has reached progressively higher levels.

Belgium's financial structure is strong. Substantial domestic funds are available for investment, and gold and foreign exchange reserves have strengthened measurably.

The economy is predominantly industrial and relies to a high degree on international trade. Because it is a processor nation, Belgium must import large quantities of raw materials and semimanufactures. Establishment of enterprises by foreign firms and new and enlarged Belgian factories have given impetus to increased imports of machinery and industrial equipment.

As a result of expanded economic activity, wages have risen and personal incomes have grown. With remarkably steady wholesale and retail price levels, the increase in retail sales reflects a higher sales volume, rather than increased prices for consumer goods. The Belgian consumer has achieved one of the highest standards of living in the world.

The United States supplied 9 percent of total imports into Belgium-Luxembourg (BLEU) in 1961. However, the United States share of that market declined from 10 percent in 1958, even though our exports to BLEU increased by 21 percent in that period.

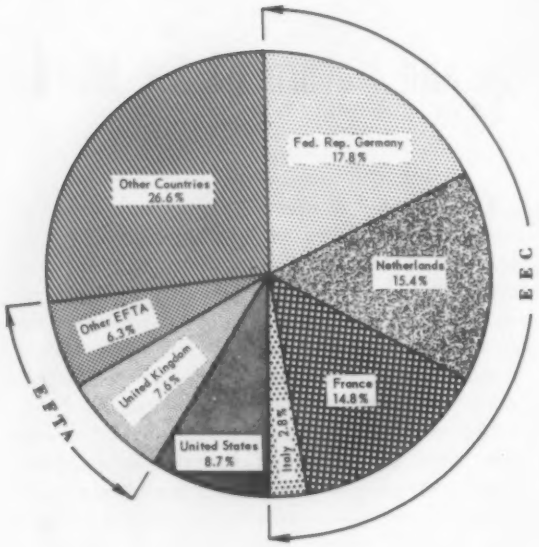
Events in the Common Market are developing rapidly, and United States exporters should waste no time analyzing the Belgian market to assure their present position and to take advantage of future opportunities.

PRESENT IMPORT LEVEL AND PATTERN

Belgium-Luxembourg's (BLEU) imports have increased steadily and impressively for a number of years, broken only by the recession of 1958. Imports, which were valued at 156,447 million francs ($3,129 million) in 1958, rose 10 percent in 1959 to 172,090 million ($3,442 million) and 15 percent in 1960 to 197,854 million ($3,957 million). The upward trend continued in 1961 as imports

Graph I.—BLEU Imports, 1961

Percentage of Total by Major Suppliers



Source: Bulletin Mensuel du Commerce Exterieur

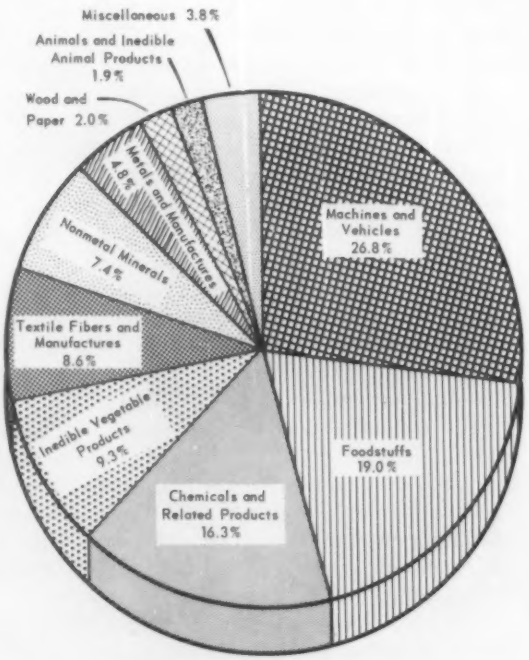
amounted to 210,952 million francs ($4,219 million), 6.6 percent above the 1960 period.

France was BLEU's principal supplier prior to World War II. In the years immediately following the war, the United States gained that position, supplying goods unobtainable in war-ravaged Europe. Since 1953, the Federal Republic of Germany has been the main supplier, contributing during 1958–61 more than 16 percent of total BLEU imports. Following Germany, the principal suppliers are the Netherlands, France, and the United States, in that order.

As would be expected, the greater part of BLEU foreign trade today is carried on with other European countries, particularly with other members of the European Economic Community (EEC), i.e., the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Italy. Sales to the EEC countries in 1960 for the first time amounted to more than 50 percent of total BLEU exports, a situation which was repeated in 1961. Purchases from the EEC in 1960 were greater than 48 percent of total imports, and in 1961 they rose above the 50 percent mark.

Essentially a processing nation whose labor force is engaged to a considerable extent in producing for foreign markets, Belgium traditionally imports foodstuffs, raw materials, and semifinished products, and exports semimanufactures and finished goods. Principal imports are grains, fruits, vegetables and other foodstuffs, ores and concentrates, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, coal, petroleum and petroleum products, textiles and textile products (notably cotton and wool), precious stones (principally diamonds), base metals, transportation equipment (especially automobiles), and various types of machinery and industrial apparatus.

Graph II.—Composition of U.S. Exports to BLEU, 1961



Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census

The United States ranks high as a supplier in a number of these groups, particularly for grains, fruits and fruit juices, organic chemicals and pharmaceuticals, raw cotton, machinery and apparatus, and automobiles and aircraft.

DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING IMPORTS

Belgian economic activity has continued to expand since 1958. Except for the ailing coal industry, most industries have operated at high levels, many reaching progressively higher levels of activity. A new peak of industrial activity was established in September 1962.

Belgium is poor in natural resources and imports large quantities of raw materials to process into semifinished and finished products. Approximately 65 percent of all the country's industrial production is sold abroad. Thus, maintenance of the present level of prosperity is contingent upon the continued high volume of world trade and upon Belgium's ability to compete in world markets.

To become more competitive in foreign markets, Belgium has developed a program to strengthen its industry. Various incentives are offered to increase domestic and foreign investment in an effort to vitalize present industries and to attract new ones. Domestic industry, aided by this program, has expanded, and foreign investors have introduced new processes and products.

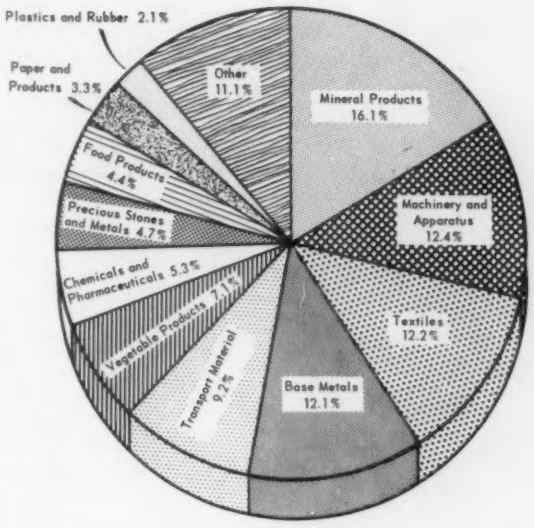
Membership in the EEC has deeply affected BLEU foreign trade. As previously indicated, the percentage of BLEU sales to, and purchases from, its EEC partners continues to rise.

The Benelux tariff, which is applicable to imports into Belgium, has been modified by various steps taken to establish the Common External Tariff (CXT) of the EEC. The Benelux duties applicable to non-EEC countries were adjusted January 1, 1961, as the first step toward the gradual introduction of the CXT. Because the rates of the Benelux tariff were generally below the level of the CXT, the adjustment resulted in increases on a large number of items. Duties applicable to imports from other EEC members have now been reduced by 50 percent for industrial products and by 35 percent for most agricultural products, following the latest cuts made on July 1, 1962.

Under the provisions of the Rome Treaty, the CXT is to be established not later than 1970, and duties on imports from EEC members must have been abolished by that time. It is possible however, that this date may be advanced in view of recent EEC acceleration decisions.

BLEU import and exchange controls are liberal. A relatively small number of products are subject to import licensing requirements when imported from free world sources. Where such licenses are required from non-Communist countries, usually they are readily granted. Quantitative restrictions are applied to only a few products, but they are administered in such a manner as to constitute a negligible impediment to U.S. exports.

Graph III.—BLEU Imports, 1961
Percent of Total by Commodity Group



Sources Bulletin Mensuel du Commerce Exterieur

CONSUMPTION PATTERNS AND TRENDS

General Levels of Consumption

Belgium enjoys one of the highest standards of living in the world. Per capita income is among the highest in Europe, although it is less than half that in the United States. Consumption, accordingly, is high.

It is estimated that in 1961 consumer expenditures were distributed as follows: 32.2 percent for food; 13.7 for clothing; 10.5 for lodging; 11.5 for heat, light, furniture and durables; 14.7 for travel, education, medical care and similar expenses; and 17.4 percent for luxuries and amusements.

The gross national product at current market prices for the years 1958–60 [1] is shown in table 1.

[1] Data for 1961 are not yet available as the National Statistical Institute of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, which prepares the data, lost key personnel and records in the disastrous collapse of a building in Brussels.

Table 1.—Belgium: National Product and Expenditure, 1958–60

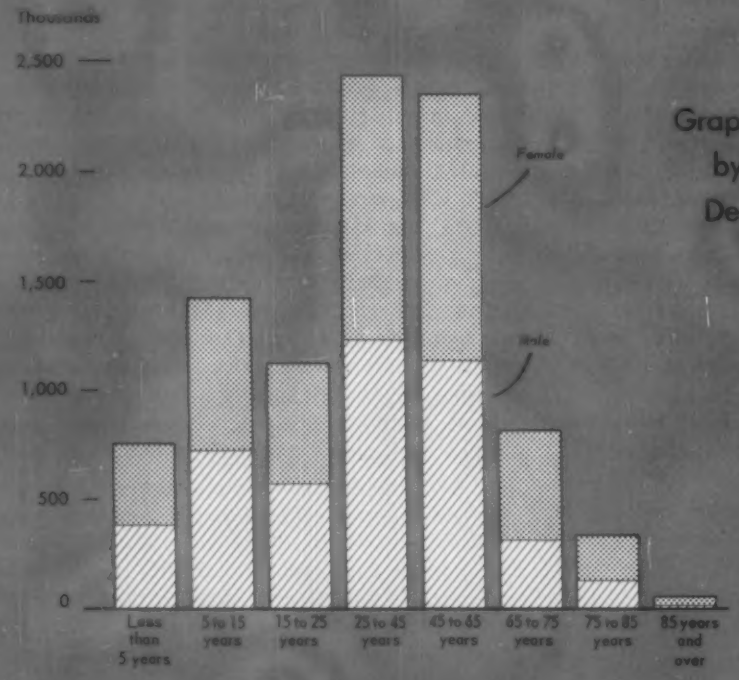
[At current prices in billion Belgian francs]

Item	1958	1959	1960
Private consumption	377.2	401.0	417.4
Public consumption	62.8	67.0	72.3
Gross domestic fixed capital formation	89.6	98.5	106.5
Changes in stocks	0.8	−1.3	3.7
Exports of goods and services	191.6	194.7	221.8
Less: Imports of goods and services	*171.0*	*187.5*	*215.7*
Gross national product at market prices	551.0	572.4	608.0

Source: General Statistics, *OEEC Statistical Bulletins*, September 1961.

Of the total population in Belgium—9,229,000 in 1961—about 42 percent lived in the five major cities. These cities with their 1961 population are: Brussels, 1,437,756; Antwerp, 873,052; Liège, 609,146; Charleroi, 466,494; and Ghent, 461,115.

Belgium is one of the most densely populated countries of the world with 777 inhabitants per square mile. Because of this concentration, the market is relatively compact and a wide consumer group is available in a small geographical area.



Graph IV.—Population by Age and Sex, December 31, 1960

Source: Statistical Bulletin, National Institute of Statistics

Courtesy Belgian Tourist Bureau

Typical scene in Ghent, one of Belgium's leading industrial centers.

Crowds throng Belgian marketplace.

Courtesy National Geographic Magazine © National Geographic Society

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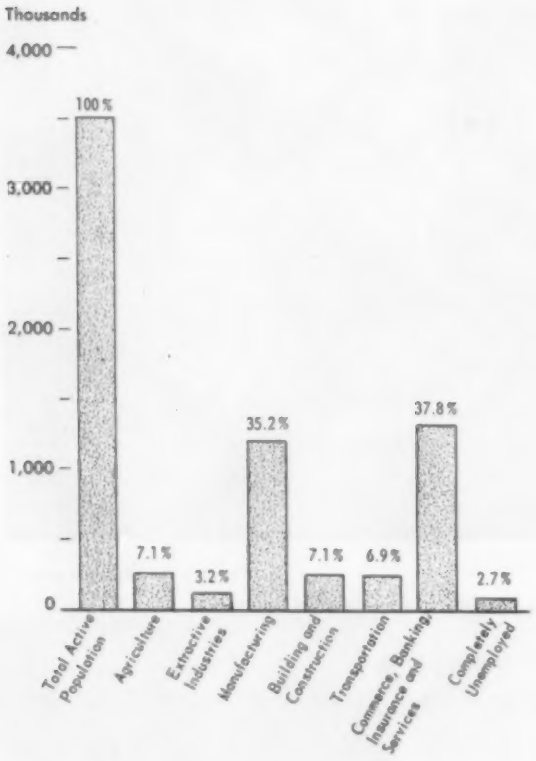
Graph V.—Belgium's Economically Active Population, by Industry Grouping, December 31, 1961



Source: National Bank of Belgium

Changes in Consumption

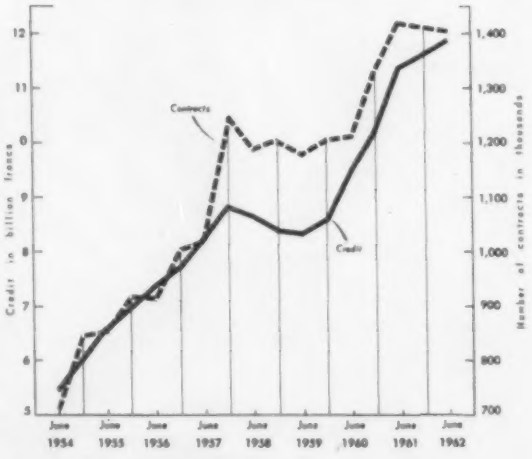
Buying habits in the Belgian market are changing. With the rising personal income, proportionately less is required for the purchase of essentials, leaving more for the acquisition of higher quality merchandise and nonessential items. The continual entry of young persons into the actively purchasing public has induced a change from many of the traditional and conventional purchases.

Installment sales have been rising, especially since the moderate relaxation of installment-buying controls in 1959. Amounts of such sales for 1959–61 were: 1959, 8.2 billion francs ($164 million); 1960, 9.6 billion ($192 million); and in 1961, 10.1 billion ($203 million). Outstanding credit at the end of 1961 amounted to 11.8 billion francs ($236 million)—an alltime record. The most important installment purchase categories are motor vehicles and household and personal items. The relaxation of installment controls has brought about much consumption which otherwise would either have been deferred or possibly never brought into being.

Price is not always the dominant factor in the purchasing of many goods. The Belgian consumer buys on the basis of superior quality, better design, and utility, and sometimes, particularly with respect to U.S. goods, on the basis of prestige appeal.

An increasing number of working housewives also are contributing to the change in buying habits. The working wife desiring to spend as little time shopping as possible, wishes to obtain her requirements quickly and in as near ready-to-serve form as possible. A trend toward self-service stores and prepackaged products, therefore, is increasing. This, in turn, has led to increased consumption of branded merchandise with standardized prices.

Graph VI.—Contracts in Effect and Credit Outstanding at End of Period, 1954-62



Source: Statistical Bulletin, National Institute of Statistics

CHAPTER II

Distribution Facilities and Services

UNTIL RECENTLY the distribution system in Belgium depended predominantly on small retail units. The way was opened in March 1959 for a change, when the "loi de Cardenas," a law protecting the small shopkeeper by restricting the expansion of retail department and chain stores, was abolished. To ease the impact created by the expiration of the statute, a gentleman's agreement was reached between the major distribution organizations and the Minister for the Middle Classes whereby the big store owners agreed not to expand their operations before the spring of 1961. On January 1, 1961, the agreement came to an end and complete freedom of competition was restored.

As in the United States, the larger stores and chains buy directly from abroad, with their buyers selecting the purchases. Smaller units buy principally from agents and wholesalers in Belgium only, occasionally purchasing individual items direct from the foreign producer.

Advertising is widespread and is effectively used in the sale of goods.

Transportation facilities in Belgium are excellent.

MARKETING CHANNELS

Import Channels

Belgium has all types of establishments dealing with foreign trade, from the firm importing for its own account to the import broker. Many chambers of commerce circulate trade opportunities to their members and are active in bringing buyer and seller together.

Foreign concerns customarily have an exclusive representative for the whole country. The majority of the larger wholesale firms engage in the import-export business and also handle domestic distribution.

If a firm in Belgium is not interested in dealing with an exclusive distributor, the usual business practice is for the firm to approach the manufacturer direct. In this case, the exclusive distributor, in accordance with the terms of his contract, will normally receive a commission on such a transaction.

Belgium has become the seat of operation for a substantial number of U.S. firms. These subsidiaries act as sales agents, assemblers, or manufacturers of the firm's products. In many instances, the subsidiary is a combination of all three. Such firms import for warehousing against future sales in Belgium and other parts of Europe, for servicing products of the parent company, for assembly and sale, or for manufacturing.

Wholesale and Retail Channels

The latest available survey of the number of business firms in operation is a census made on December 31, 1947. It indicates a total of 19,302 wholesalers, 22,736 wholesaler-retailers, and 273,280 retailers. In each classification, the great majority consists of small business firms.

The continuing predominance of small business firms was borne out in a recent study by the National Employees Federation (Centrale Nationale des Employés). It reported that there are about 276,000 retail establishments in Belgium, or about 33 customers per store. In the grocery field, integrated stores comprise 34 percent of the total,

Courtesy of the Belgian Embassy

Belgian supermarkets feature modern displays of food products.

made up of chain stores, 11 percent, consumer cooperatives, 11 percent, and large stores, 12 percent. Independent grocery stores comprise the remaining 66 percent, of which 20 percent are associated in voluntary groups, and the remaining 46 percent operate entirely on their own. For many small retailers the store is merely a supplementary, and not the main, source of family income.

The increased tempo of commercial and industrial activity in recent years has brought about changes in the distribution system which are more and more noticeable. While the loi de Cardenas was still in effect, a trend toward integration of the retail trade began through efforts of the larger stores to bypass the provisions of the law. These took the form of setting up voluntary chains and the creation of "middenstandswarenhuizen," a type of independent medium-sized department store. With the establishment of these two forms of outlets, some department stores were projected into the wholesale field, since the chains and the middenstandswarenhuizen obtained their supplies contractually from the large department stores. Some 300 independent retailers are supplied by such stores. Although the move injected a few large units into the wholesale trade, wholesaling in Belgium is still characterized by the large number of small units engaged therein.

Retail outlets in Belgium range from the large department store to the small shop owned and operated by an individual. Although the preponderance of retail outlets are small shops, such enterprises are decreasing in number. A trend toward concentration has been noted, especially since the demise of the loi de Cardenas, with the formation of voluntary chains, the expansion of department stores, the establishment of middenstandswarenhuizen in areas not large enough to support a major department store, and the development of chain stores under one management.

Supermarkets and shopping centers are beginning to appear; discount firms, especially those handling electric domestic equipment, and self-service stores are springing up. Self-service is not confined to smaller units. Recently two large department store chains introduced self-service in their stores.

As a result of these changes in retailing with concurrent new methods of selling, the smaller enterprises with little capital have been forced into a weaker position and the more dynamic ones are

The Belgian system for public tender generally ments. Even though the department stores have developed from family businesses, their growth and success are due largely to investments from sources outside the family.

Government Procurement

The Belgian system for public tender generally does not discriminate against foreign enterprises. The two methods for allotting contracts are: (1) Competitive open call for tenders, for all bidders without distinction of nationality; and (2) private sales contracts, for a certain number of restrictively fixed cases.

A decree of October 1935 established the Consultative Commission for Contracts and Tenders. All organs of the Government are required to submit to the Commission all contracts intended to be concluded, if these contracts comprise "either the designation of a bidder, subcontractor, or dealer of foreign nationality, or the employment of foreign personnel, or the furnishing or use of products or materials other than Belgian products or materials."

The decree does not, however, prevent foreigners from submitting tenders, and the competent administration is not obliged to follow the advice of the Commission. The Commission merely compares the bids and gives a slight margin of preference to Belgian bids. In principle, Belgian contractors are given preference if their price is not more than 10 percent higher than the lowest foreign contract bid price.

Any firm, whether Belgian or foreign, may bid on public works projects. Bids, however, may be awarded only to Belgian contractors listed with the Commission des Enterpreneurs at the Ministry of Public Works. Two exceptions to this procedure are permitted: (1) A foreign firm may be awarded the contract if no Belgian contractor is able to execute the work envisaged; and (2) a foreign firm, which has submitted a bid which is more than 10 percent below that of the nearest Belgian competitor, may be awarded the contract by special authorization of the Minister of Public Works.

AIDS TO MARKETING

The Belgian market, though not large, is very active, and has a substantial yearly turnover. The country is a good customer of the United States, and its economy reflects fairly accurately the attitudes and conditions found in other industrialized Western European countries, particularly in other member states of the European Economic Community. Although U.S. products are available in quantity, there is room for the introduction of new products and expansion of lines already represented. The Belgian consumer is receptive to most promotional methods effective in the United States.

Market Research [1]

Market research, as known in the United States, is relatively new to Belgium but is growing constantly. Although economic data utilized in market surveys and studies are readily available in quantity, some forms are still considered as confidential in the business world.

Several firms in Brussels, some of which are American-owned or are affiliated with U.S. firms, engage in market research. A number of these are also engaged in the advertising promotion field providing complete service for their clients. The Belgian businessman is becoming increasingly appreciative of the value of such research. The entrepeneur's reliance on his own judgment is being supplanted more and more by recourse to market research techniques.

In somewhat parallel vein, several consumer organizations have been established for the purpose of testing and making comparisons between specific goods and services. The results are circulated by means of periodicals. Some of these publications state which products are the "best buys" in almost identical fashion to similar publications in the United States.

Since 1950 several quality-control agencies have arisen in Belgium. These are distinct from the consumer organizations but have similar objectives.

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[1] See also the publication, *A Directory of Foreign Advertising Agencies and Marketing Research Organizations*, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1959. 135 pages. 45 cents.

Advertising Media

Advertising techniques are well developed in Belgium with increasingly substantial sums being spent on advertising each year. For example, it is estimated that $60 million was spent in 1958 for advertising—a 50-percent increase in 6 years. Since Belgium is a bilingual country, use of both Flemish and French is essential to the conduct of a successful advertising campaign.

Newspapers and periodicals.—The daily press is probably the best advertising medium in Belgium. In 1958 there were 59 daily newspapers—19 in Flemish, 39 in French, and 1 in German. Total circulation of daily newspapers was about 2.6 million. In addition, there were 12 weeklies in French and 13 in Flemish. The circulation of the weeklies amounted to about 1.7 million. Some 500 weekly and monthly magazines, as well as technical journals and economic reviews, also are published. Consumer goods advertisements are carried in most newspapers, while technical materials and goods are advertised in newspapers, technical journals, and specialized publications.

Radio and television.—The Belgian radio and television systems are Government-owned and advertising is not permitted. Radio Luxembourg, however, is operated much along the lines of American stations and accepts advertising on radio and television. The television facilities of Radio Luxembourg naturally are technically limited in range; however, the radio broadcasts are heard all over Belgium. The programs are extremely popular and offer an excellent entree to the Belgian consumer.

Exhibitions and fairs.—Belgium has a great many exhibitions and fairs each year. These range from large general international fairs to small technical and specialized exhibitions, covering consumer goods, technical items, and industrial products. Many are closed exhibitions, open only to those specifically interested and dealing in the particular field. Others are public exhibitions permitting general entry. While some expressly limit participation, the majority are open to American and other foreign exhibitors. The two most important general fairs are the Brussels International Fair, held in the spring, and the Ghent International Fair, presented in September.

The world's goods are displayed at the Brussels International Trade Fair.

Courtesy Présence de Bruxelles

Courtesy Présence de Bruxelles

Displays at the Brussels International Trade Fair attract buyers from more than 70 countries.

Store displays.—Window displays, particularly in Brussels and the larger cities, are effectively used to display merchandise. In the larger stores and better specialty shops, items for sale are tastefully exhibited.

Department stores from time to time feature goods of one specially chosen country, generally for a 2-week period. Merchandise from the chosen country is then displayed throughout the store, with special exhibits, flags, emblems, pictures, tourist information, and other promotional material located in strategic spots to enhance the display.

Other means of display.—Some advertising is done in the motion-picture theaters in the form of short films, demonstrating merchandise and identifying the sellers. Placards and posted bills are widely used in the cities to generate sales. Large cities feature many electric signs, some of which are very intricate. Linear electric signs, comprised of a battery of electric lights, are sometimes located at strategic points to carry news bulletins interspersed with advertising plugs. Streetcar and bus advertising is widespread.

Advertising agencies.—A substantial number of firms, located mainly in Brussels, offer complete advertising services, such as advice, planning, art and copy work, media selection, placement, and translations into French, Flemish, or other languages. The larger firms prepare advertising for transmission via Luxembourg's radio and television systems, and also offer direct mail and mailing list service. Some firms, in addition to regular advertising services, engage in market research and analysis, trade or industry surveys, and public opinion polls in connection with advertising campaigns.

Several companies are specialized in the fields of motion-picture theater screen advertising and in outdoor and billboard advertising. Most of these are located in Brussels.

At least two United States advertising firms have subsidiaries operating in Belgium which also maintain market research facilities.

Business Associations

There are 36 chambers of commerce and industry in Belgium. These are regional interprofessional associations representing and sponsoring the economic interests of the area in which they are located.

In addition to certain official acts, such as delivering certificates of origin, the chambers supply regional data concerning facilities, ports, means of communication, power networks, and other sectors of economic activity. The chambers sometimes maintain lists of local firms likely to reply to business proposals, and may be utilized as facilities for seeking agents or representatives. Customs formalities, fiscal questions, socal problems, trade policy, and other facts on Belgium as a whole may also be obtained from the chambers.

Because of their intimate relationship with Belgian business, the chambers of commerce and industry provide good liaison between the United States businessman and the particular region in Belgium with which he wishes to have commercial relations. The chambers are united in the Fédération Nationale des Chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie de Belgique (National Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Belgium) located in Brussels.

Another important commercial group is L'Association Belge des Négociants Exportateurs et Importateurs (The Belgium Association of Export and Import Merchants), a national federation of Belgian export and import firms located at Antwerp, which has been in existence for some 38 years. Among its members are some of the country's most important foreign trade firms which, for the most part, import for their own account. The Association maintains close liaison with Government agencies connected with foreign trade. It also operates a service to generate imports and exports by bringing together buyers and sellers.

The Fédération des Industries Belges (Federation of Belgian Industries, F.I.B.) in Brussels is an association representing at the national level some 35,000 industrial enterprises associated through F.I.B.'s member federations. It comprises industrial federations and groups in all the major fields of Belgian industrial activity.

In its function, the F.I.B. undertakes to speak for Belgian industry. It has developed specialized research services and issues a number of publications. It invites inquiries which it will forward to the appropriate member federation concerned with particular products. Like the associations mentioned above, the member federations deal with questions of obtaining buyers and sellers for various products.

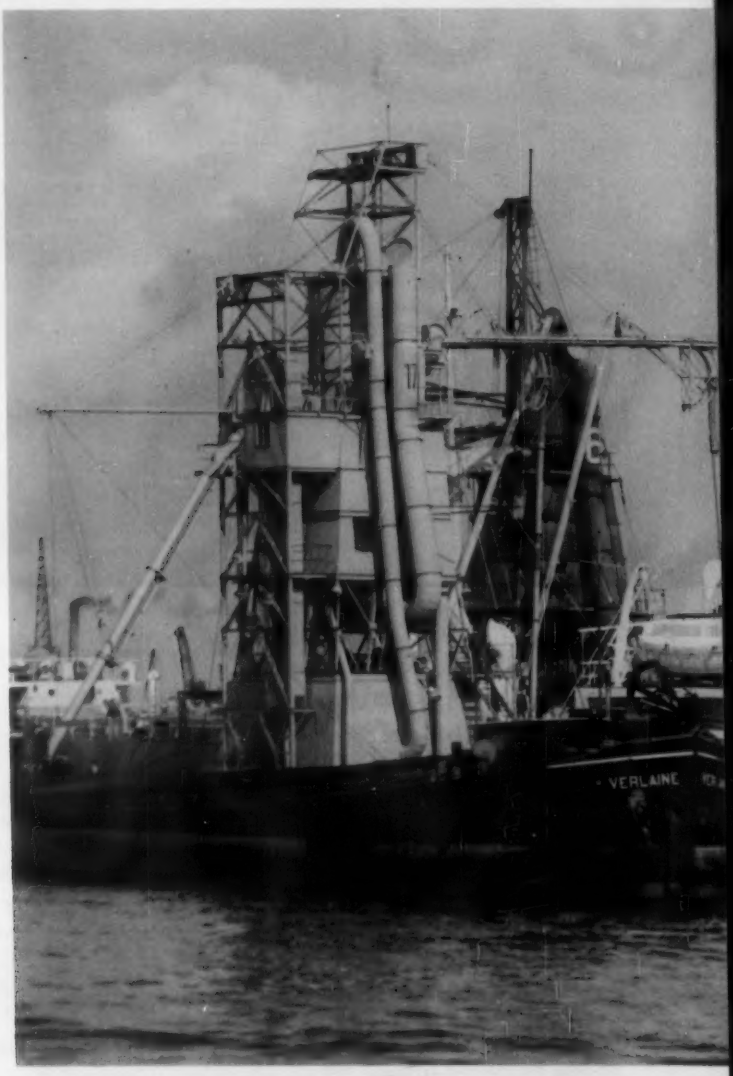
U.S. Marketing Aids

Many U.S. banks correspond with Belgian banks. The foreign departments of such U.S. banks are well equipped to give service and advice in matters of foreign trading. The Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York maintains an office in Brussels, the only branch of an American Bank in Belgium.

A number of Belgian banks maintain branches in the United States.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Belgium, located in Brussels, is an organization comprised of American firms engaged in business in Belgium and of Belgian firms either representing U.S. manufacturers or otherwise interested in trade with the United States. It has membership in the United States Chamber of Commerce and in the International Chamber of Commerce and it cooperates with other American chambers of commerce in Europe on matters of mutual interest. Unsubsidized and wholly independent, the American Chamber assists both Belgian and American concerns in making agency connections, advises American companies contemplating establishment of subsidiaries or branches in Belgium, and endeavors to minimize differences between Belgian and American commercial interests.

Aside from these U.S. private sources, data and information relating to general marketing conditions in Belgium can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of International Commerce, Washington 25, D.C., and regarding specific commodities from the Business and Defense Services Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington 25, D.C., or from Field Offices of the Department located in principal cities of the United States. Marketing data may also be obtained from the Commercial Section, Embassy of Belgium, 3330 Garfield Street, NW., Washington 8, D.C., from any of the Belgian consulates general located throughout the



Floating elevators in the Port of Antwerp permit rapid grain transshipments from bulk-carrier onto coaster.

Courtesy Belgian Trade Review

United States, or from the Belgian commercial offices in Seattle, Wash., and St. Louis, Mo. Belgium's consulates general are located at the following places: 620 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y.; 333 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.; 207 New Orleans International Trade Mart, New Orleans, La.; 1004 Baltimore Ave., Kansas City, Mo.; 444 California St., San Francisco, Calif.; 448 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, Calif.

TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Commercial Centers and Ports

The two principal commercial centers of Belgium are the cities of Brussels and Antwerp. The secondary centers are Ghent and Liège. Belgium's other major cities are primarily industrial with commercial activity of lesser importance.

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Courtesy Belgian Trade Review

Construction work in progress in the Cockerill shipyards in Antwerp.

Belgium has only two ocean ports—Ostend and Zeebrugge. The other ports are inland. Antwerp is the largest port in the country and one of the largest in the world. Ghent is second in importance. A large number of small ports handle traffic on Belgium's extensive network of inland waterways, and act as feeders to the larger ports.

Antwerp.—With a history dating from the Roman period, Antwerp has long been an important seaport. It is situated on the right bank of the Scheldt River, and is approximately 55 miles from the North Sea. The port consists of two sections: Quays along the river front, and a large dock system connected to the river by five locks. There are 32 miles of quays, of which 28 miles are for oceangoing vessels and 4 for barge traffic. The water area of the docks amounts to 1,055 acres for maritime navigation and 86 acres for rivercraft. There are numerous municipal and privately owned cranes and hoists with capacities ranging from 2 to 150 tons. Large storage accommodations for goods are supplied by municipal and private warehouses. Special warehousing facilities include: Graneries with storage capacity of 60,000 tons, cold storage chambers with capacity of 2,237,000 cubic feet, potash warehouses of 150,000 tons capacity, and tank storage capacity of 93,170,000 cubic feet.

Cargo discharged at Antwerp by seagoing vessels in 1961 amounted to 23,232,000 metric tons and in January–June 1962 to 12,978,000. Cargo loaded for the same periods totaled 15,420,000 metric tons and 8,358,000 respectively. Ores, phosphates, grain, petroleum, coal and textile fibers account for about 80 percent of all goods imported into Antwerp. Iron and steel products account for from 30 to 40 percent of exports. Fertilizers make up an additional 16 percent. Other important exports are bunker oil, chemical products, glass, and cement.

The Port of Antwerp is carrying out a 10-year development plan in which 5.1 billion francs ($102 million) will be spent for the modernization and extension of harbor facilities in the period 1956–65. Plans call for the construction of docks, sheds, and landing stages, the installation of new cargo handling equipment, and the development of portside industrial areas. Total berthing space for seagoing vessels and rivercraft will be increased from 32 to 47 miles.

Ghent.—Belgium's second port, Ghent, is located 19 miles inland from Terneuzen, the Netherlands. The port is connected with the sea by a canal which leads to the Scheldt Estuary at Terneuzen. The canal is sufficiently large to permit the access of oceangoing ships. Facilities include

7.5 miles of quay wall, 12.5 miles of banks with landing stages, 42 acres of sheds, 162 acres of open storage space, and 757 acres of water surface.

Cargo handled in 1961 and January–October 1962, respectively, amounted to 2,016,000 and 822,000 metric tons discharged, and 732,000 and 420,000 tons loaded.

Ghent is pursuing a port development plan to expand and renew facilities and improvement of the Ghent-Terneuzen canal and facilities began in May 1961. In addition, a new lock is under construction at Terneuzen to accommodate ships up to 50,000 tons, permitting them access to the port of Ghent.

Cargo handled in the Port of Ghent primarily consists of bulk cargo comprising about 90 percent of goods discharged and 80 percent of goods loaded. Representatives of incoming cargo are ore, pyrites, coal, lumber, phosphates, potash, sand, gravel, and various textile fibers. Outgoing cargo is principally made up of iron and steel, fertilizers, chemical products, building materials, textile products, and some general cargo.

Zeebrugge.—Zeebrugge is the third ranking port in Belgium and one of the two ocean ports. Its facilities do not approach those of Antwerp or Ghent. The bulk of goods handled consists of both imports and exports of coal, coke, oil, molasses, explosives, and general cargo. Zeebrugge is connected by canal with Brugge, another small inland port. New York City is linked to Zeebrugge by direct passenger service.

Other ports.—Other Belgian ports of importance include Brugges, Brussels, Nieuport, and Ostend. Except for Ostend, an ocean port, all are located inland.

Free ports.—Belgium has no free ports or free trade zones as such. Its liberal provisions for storing, repacking, and other manipulations in warehouses and the existence of temporary free admission for further processing, however, provide substantially the same facilities and advantages available in free ports or zones.

The Belgian warehousing system is organized into customs bonded warehouses, private or commercial bonded warehouses, and private or commercial bonded warehouses by agreement.

The customs bonded warehouses (entrepôts public) are on premises belonging to the communes under the exclusive control of the customs. They are combined receiving and public warehouses. Goods are unloaded at the receiving end and after having been declared for warehousing, may be kept in the public end as long as storage fees are paid.

The private or commercial bonded warehouse (entrepôt particulier) is under the joint control of the owner and the customs authorities (keys

Cement company installations on Albert Canal, Lixhe.

Courtesy Belgian Trade Review

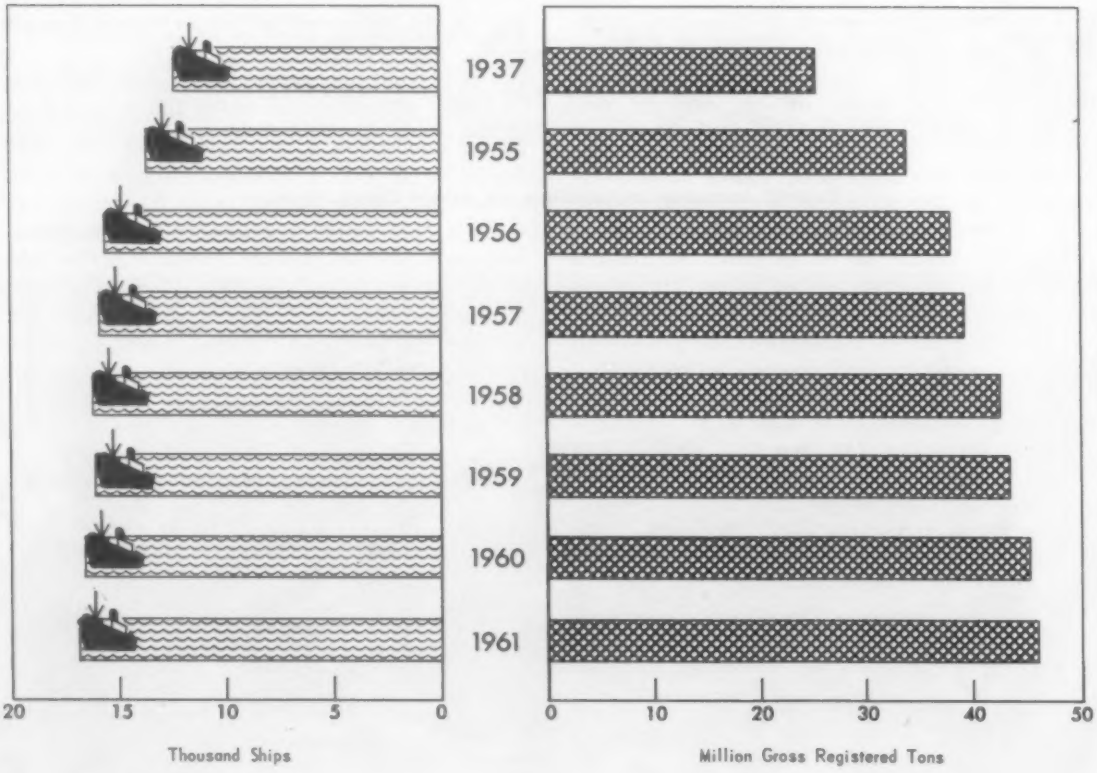
being held by each), and is located on private property. Spirituous beverages, wines, and nonmanufactured tobacco are stored in such warehouses.

The private or commercial bonded warehouse by agreement (entrepôt fictif) is located on private property under the supervision of the owner but subject to inspection by customs authorities. Partly manufactured iron and steel products, mineral oils, woods, certain grains, wines, flours, and fruits are representative of items stored in warehouses of this type.

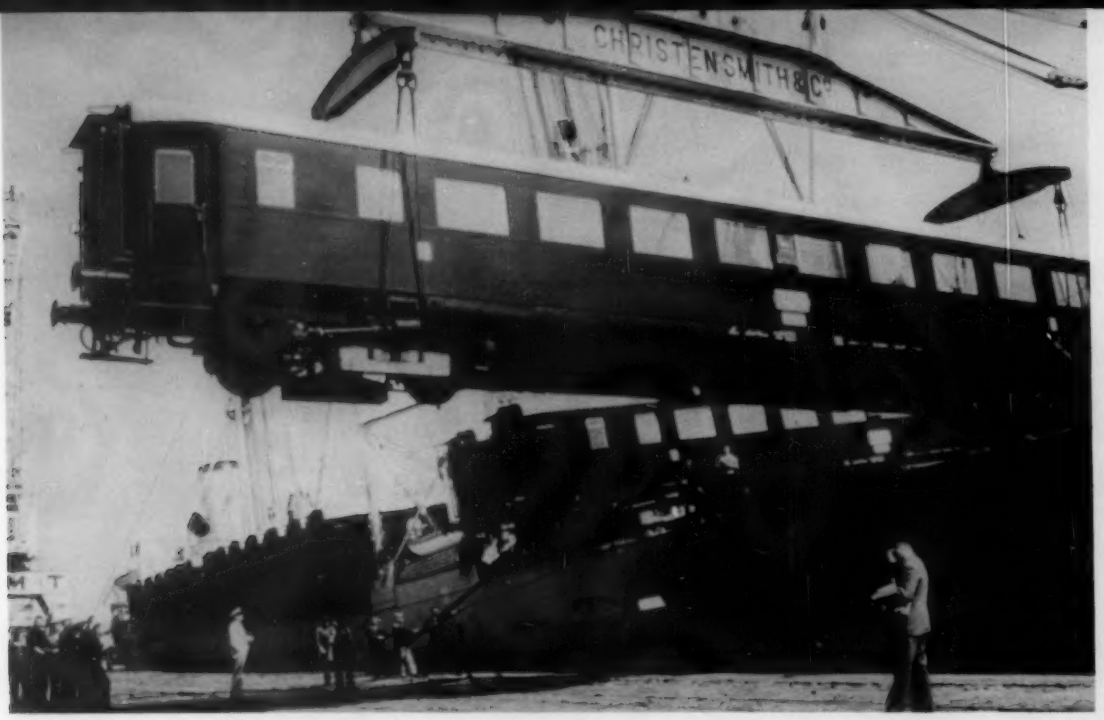
Through Antwerp, one of the world's major ports, Belgium is well served by shipping lines. Some 270 such lines connect Antwerp with the entire world.

In addition to the many foreign lines servicing the trade routes from the United States to Belgium, the following U.S. shipping lines are in this service: United States Lines Co., Isbrandtsen Co., Inc., and Waterman Steamship Corp., servicing the North Atlantic coast of the United States to Belgium; United States Lines Co. from the South Atlantic coast; Bloomfield Steamship Co., Lykes Brothers Steamship Co., Inc., States Marine Lines, Inc., and Waterman Steamship Corp. plying the run from Gulf ports to Belgium; and States Marine Lines, Inc., running service from the U.S. Pacific coast. No U.S. lines are regularly employed in service on the Great Lakes route to Belgium.

Graph VII. — Ships Entering Antwerp and Tonnage, 1937, 1955-61



Source: Antwerp Port Statistics.



Courtesy National Geographic Magazine © National Geographic Society

A world-famous foundry makes rail and tram cars in Bruges.

Railways and Roads

Belgium has one of the densest railway networks in Europe. The standard-gage railway is operated by the Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Belge, a company primarily Government controlled but with some private participation. A narrow-gage road, engaged in interurban traffic, is incorporated into the system; it has, however, declined in importance with the development of automotive transport.

In June 1961, announcement was made of the Government's intention to pursue a plan of rationalization of the railways over the next several years. This program to modernize facilities, which is now well under way, includes complete elimination of steam locomotives, increased electrification of lines, introduction of new cars, elimination of unnecessary lines, reduction of excess employees, and strengthening operations to reduce deficits and Government subsidies.

At the end of 1961, the length of the Belgian railway network was 2,871 miles, of which 2,011 miles were open to passenger service and 860 miles open only to freight traffic. Of the total trackage, 594 miles (20.7 percent) were electrified. In connection with the modification being made in the system, the length of substitute autobus lines was increased to 2,083 miles, while regular public autobus service was reduced to 1,804. Belgian standard-gage railways in 1961 carried 265,140,000 passengers and 61,020,000 tons of freight, and in January–August 1962, 179,048,000 passengers and 40,512,000 tons of freight.

Courtesy of National Geographic Magazine © National Geographic Society

Commerce on the Albert Canal invades a Belgian pastoral scene. This busy super waterway connects Antwerp with Liège.

Belgium has excellent railway connections with all European countries. One of the main routes from London to the Federal Republic of Germany, Scandinavia, Switzerland, and Italy passes through Belgium via Ostend and Brussels. The main Paris-Amsterdan and Paris-Berlin lines are also run via Brussels.

Motor transportation has been growing rapidly in Belgium in recent years. The Belgian highway system is well integrated and includes a limited amount of express highways. There are about 6,200 miles of Government highways, and some 25,000 to 30,000 miles of secondary roads, maintained by the Provinces and municipalities. Provincial roads are gradually being placed under national administration and will cease to exist as a category within a few years.

In 1962 alone, it was estimated that expenditures for express highways would reach 1,950 million francs ($39 million), while an additional 937 million ($18.7 million) were to be spent for ordinary roads, and 213 million ($4.26 million) for urban road improvements.

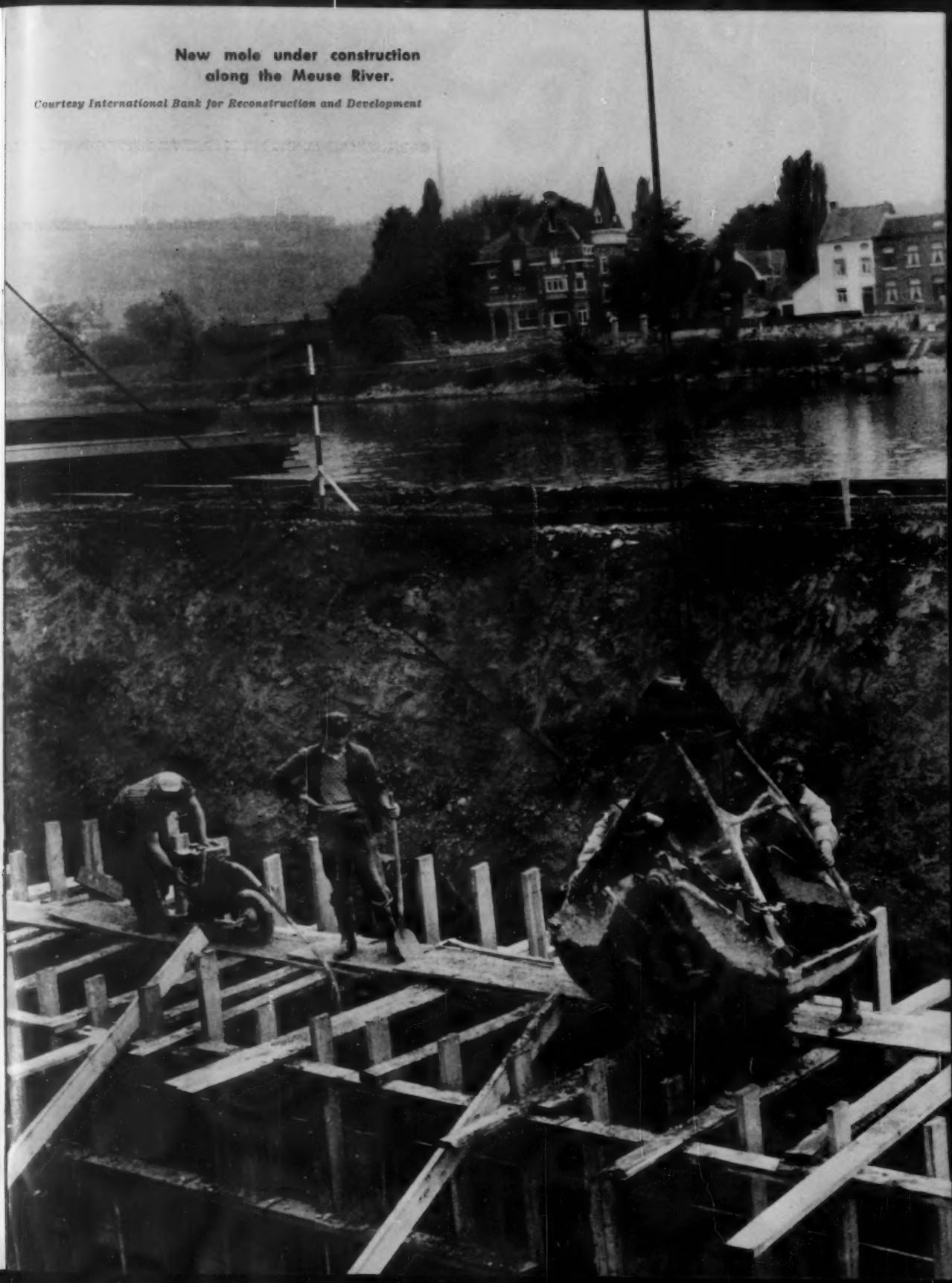
Inland Waterways

Inland waterways are of vital importance to the economy of Belgium and in 1960 carried slightly more cargo than did the railways. The 984-mile waterways system serves most of the industrial areas with the exception of the textile center of Verviers and the steel area of Athus.

The main ship canals include: The Ghent-Terneuzen (18 miles) of which half is in the Netherlands; the Roupel (20 miles) by which ships drawing 18 feet reach Brussels from the sea; and the Bruges canal (7.5 miles) from Zeebrugge on the North Sea to Bruges. The Albert Canal (80.5 miles) links Liège with Antwerp and accommodates barges up to 2,000 tons capacity. In addition, great use is made of the country's rivers and lesser canals which encompass Belgium in a network of waterways.

The system dates mainly from the 19th century when a great number of the country's waterways, locks, and bridges were built to meet the requirements of that era. As a practical matter, this meant the capacity to handle barges not exceeding 300 tons. Following World War I, the inland water network was modernized and in subsequent years the system has been improved and expanded. Currently, an ambitious plan for modernization is being undertaken. Standardization of locks and widening and deepening channels will increase the amount of tonnage carried, particularly on the secondary channels.

The Belgian inland fleet contains over 6,000 barges, most of which are self-propelled, plus 187 tugboats and 300 tankers.



New mole under construction along the Meuse River.

Courtesy International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Panoramic view of Brussels, Belgium's capital and largest city.

Courtesy Belgian Embassy

Air Services

In the field of scheduled transport, SABENA, a semiprivate organization controlled by the Government, has a monopoly. SABENA operates both freight and passenger service. The movement of goods by air is limited usually to goods of a high unit value which can bear the higher costs of air transport or goods which are urgently needed. Air freight shipments, however, are playing a larger part in servicing equipment and many items, even of great weight, are shipped by air to keep machinery in operation if the expense entailed is warranted.

In 1961 SABENA carried 727,608 passengers and 19,560 tons of freight and 522,901 passengers and 11,046 tons of freight in January–August 1962. The company maintains daily flights to other European countries, the United States, the Middle East, the Republic of the Congo (Leopoldville), and South Africa. A regular helicopter service operates between Brussels and Liège, Cologne, Duisburg, Rotterdam, Maastricht, and Eindhoven. Alternately, SABENA and an American airline maintain a daily service between New York and Brussels.

The principal international airports are Brussels-National (about 20 minutes from the capital) and Deurne (10 minutes from Antwerp). These airports are used by numbers of foreign airlines which operate services to Belgium.

Small barge on the old Charleroi-Seneffe Canal.

Courtesy International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

CHAPTER III

Trade Regulations and Practices

THE FOREIGN TRADE of Belgium is combined with that of Luxembourg within the framework of the Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union (BLEU). As a necessary corollary, the two countries have a common system of foreign trade controls.

IMPORT AND EXCHANGE CONTROLS

The licensing system of BLEU has its legal basis in a number of laws empowering the two Governments to control under a common system the import, export, and transit trade of the Economic Union. BLEU has removed all import restrictions based on balance-of-payment difficulties. An import license is required for only 215 classes, of which 155 are agricultural items. In the screening of license applications, the BLEU licensing authorities employ as criteria the effect of imports on the domestic economic sectors concerned.

BLEU controls over imports from both dollar and nondollar sources are identical. At the present time, about 97 percent of Benelux imports are liberalized, i.e., admitted without quantitative restrictions. Items still subject to restrictions, however, are usually admitted in liberal quantities. Although licensing is maintained on some liberalized commodities, licenses are readily granted.

BLEU foreign exchange controls date from 1944 and were instituted to control the transfer of any kind of goods and instruments of value between the Economic Union and foreign countries. Under the regulations, no importer or exporter may enter into a definite commitment with a foreign seller or buyer without first having obtained from the appropriate Belgian or Luxembourg authority the import or export document required under BLEU's licensing system. These documents are incorporated in the special instruments required for goods not subject to licensing or in the import license in the cases where an import license is required. Exchange is granted automatically. When the value of an operation does not exceed 10,000 francs ($200), payment may be made without formalities.

Import Duties [1]

Belgium, together with the Netherlands and Luxembourg, is a partner in the Benelux Customs Union, which was elevated to the status of an economic union by a treaty entered into force on November 1, 1960. Since January 1, 1948, under the Customs Union, the Benelux countries have had a common tariff which subjects imports from non-Benelux countries to identical rates of duty in the three Benelux countries. Goods originating in any of the Benelux countries or goods imported for consumption into the territory of one of the member states are exempt from customs duties in the territory of the other signatories to the Benelux Customs Union Agreement.

A new customs tariff, based on the Brussels Nomenclature, was adopted by the Benelux countries, effective March 1, 1960. It replaced the common tariff which had been in effect since 1948.

[1] See *Import Tariff System of Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg*, Overseas Business Reports, No. OBR–63–25, February 1963, for a general description of the tariff system. Information concerning the duty charged on any particular item can be obtained from the European Division, Bureau of International Commerce, U.S. Department of Commerce.

As members (together with France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Italy) of the European Economic Community (EEC) established by the Rome Treaty of 1958, the Benelux countries are committed to a policy of eventual free movement of goods, capital, and labor within the EEC member countries and the establishment of a Common External Tariff (CXT) on imports from third countries. In line with Treaty provisions, progressive tariff changes have been made since January 1, 1959. As previously mentioned, basic duties on intra-EEC trade in nonagricultural items are at present 50 percent lower, and on most agricultural items 35 percent lower than the January 1, 1957, rates.

Rates on goods imported into Benelux from non-EEC countries made their first movement toward the CXT in January 1961. Since the Benelux duties for most products were below the CXT, the movement toward the CXT meant a general increase in duties on Benelux industrial imports from non-EEC countries.

Further tariff changes will be made as the EEC progresses toward its ultimate goals. Internal duties will be progressively abolished, and external duties will be further adjusted toward the CXT.

Benelux maintains certain preferential duty rates. Commodities coming under the provision of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and Euratom are not subject to Benelux duties when imported from a member country of the Communities. Certain goods originating in the Republic of the Congo (Leopoldville), Rwanda, Burundi, or overseas territories associated with the Netherlands are totally or partially exempt from the Benelux customs duties.

Other Requirements and Charges

Like many other countries, Belgium maintains a number of regulations which, while technically not trade controls, directly affect the importation of various products. Such regulations are usually concerned with marking or labeling, health and phytosanitary controls, pure food and drugs, and similar matters. Generally, these requirements offer little impediment to normal trade.

Belgium has a number of taxes levied on all goods—both imported and domestic. Excise taxes are levied on all items containing sugar or ethyl alcohol, tobacco products, mineral waters, soft drinks, and certain petroleum products. A transaction tax is assessed on all imported goods, with only a few exceptions. Luxury taxes are levied on certain goods, but items subject to the luxury tax are exempt from the transaction tax. An import license tax is charged on imports of some agricultural goods, including meat animals, some meat products, certain dairy items, gingerbread, and several fodders.

TRADE PROCEDURES AND CUSTOMS

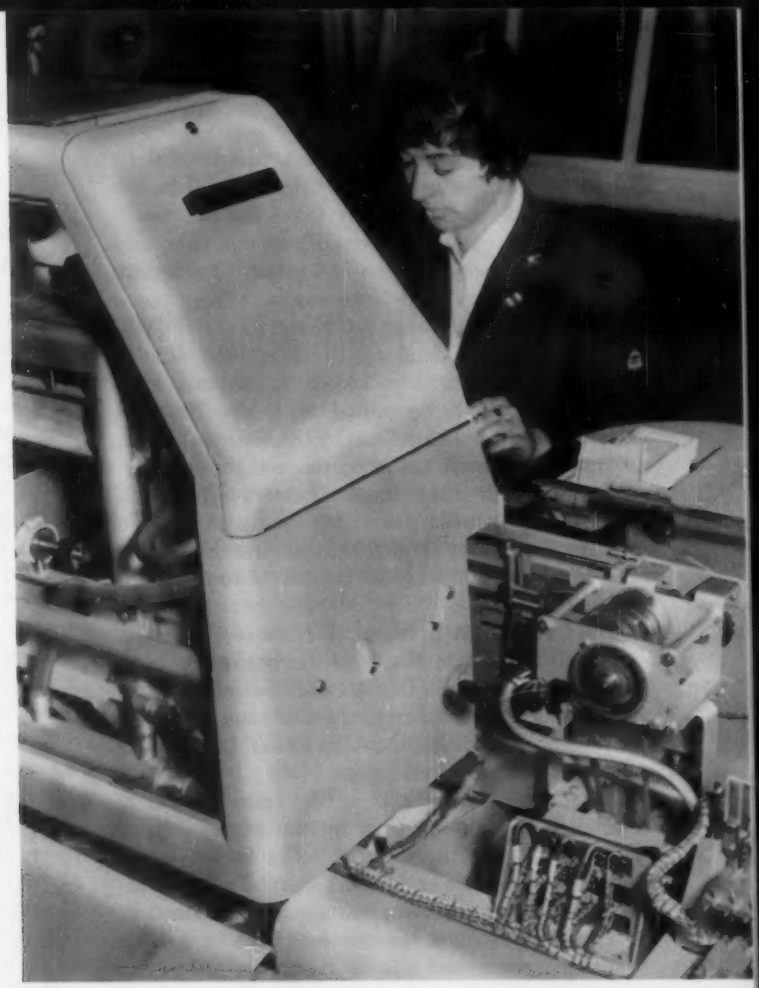
Methods of Importing

Belgians are experienced foreign traders and are well informed on the courtesies and practices of this kind of business. All types of foreign trading enterprises, ranging from freight forwarders and agents of various kinds to direct importers purchasing for their own account, may be found in Belgium.

Quotations and Payment Terms

Sales quotations are usually given either c.i.f. port of destination, or f.o.b. port of shipment, plus actual charges for freight and insurance. The former method is generally preferred by Belgian importers. Large firms, however, sometimes buy on f.o.b. terms since they may prefer to arrange for the shipping and insurance of the goods themselves. Quotations and invoicing are usually in terms of the currency of the country of origin.

There is no uniformity in the method of payment for imports into Belgium. All of the normal methods for payment are used. In recent years there has been some trend toward more liberal financing rather than payment by letters of credit or cash. Although there is a substantial number of shipments made under letters of credit, this does not reflect on the generally excellent payment standing of Belgian importers but rather indicates the customary handling for many staple commodities and transit shipments. Knowledge of the market and of the customer must be the prime considerations leading to a greater use of sight drafts, time drafts, or open accounts. In view of the substantial competition built up in the Belgian



Belgian business is modernizing with up-to-date equipment, such as this check data-coding machine.

Courtesy Belgian Trade Review

markets, in many cases it may be necessary to relax terms.

General terms of sale are payment within 30 to 90 days after delivery, varying with the commodity and the credit standing of the purchaser.

Shipping Documents [2]

The bill of lading and the commercial invoice are the only general shipping documents required by Belgium on direct importations of goods. For air shipments the air waybill and a commercial invoice in duplicate are necessary. A certificate of origin is required on all shipments of goods which are to be transshipped or warehoused in a third country while en route to Belgium. Except for fresh salt-water fish other than salmon, no certificates of origin are required for direct shipments from the United States. No consular visa is needed on these documents.

Shipments of plants and plant parts, fresh fruits, certain vegetables, certain animal products and live animals and birds must be accompanied by an appropriate sanitary or health certificate.

The United States requires the filing of a shipper's export declaration (Commerce Form 7525V) and, in many instances, a destination control statement.

[2] For details on the required shipping documents, as well as other information concerning shipments to Belgium, see *Preparing Shipments to Belgium-Luxembourg*, World Trade Information Service, part 2, No. 60–29, issued July 1960 by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Credit Facilities

By far the greatest part of credit needed by importers can be provided by commercial banks. Credit to business generally takes the two traditional forms of discount credits on one hand and of overdrafts or loans on the other. Terms are left to the discretion of the banks. These terms are influenced, however, by the National Bank's discount rates. Commercial bills or bank acceptances of not more than 120 days, properly validated, may be rediscounted with the National Bank. Credit lines are fixed by the National Bank, commensurate with the importance of the commercial bank soliciting the rediscounting and in accordance with the prevailing credit policy. In certain instances, the National Bank admits medium-term financing of imports through bank acceptances.

The Institut de Réescompte et de la Guarantie extends discount facilities to the banks for such bills as are not eligible to the National Bank because of their maturity. It also conducts open market operations buying bills either for its own account or as a broker.

There are several mercantile agencies which specialize in supplying credit information[3] on firms throughout the country. The majority are located in Brussels and several have branches in Antwerp. In addition, certain banks furnish credit information at the request of the banker of the client concerned.

Established Trade Customs

Commercial language.—Belgium is a bilingual country using French in the southern and eastern sections and Flemish in the northern and western areas. The population is divided about equally into French- and Flemish-speaking groups.

French and English are commonly used as business languages. The use of Flemish as a business language is primarily limited to commercial dealings with the Netherlands and with South Africa. French and Flemish, however, are extremely important to the U.S. businessman entering the market or attempting to expand sales of his product. Although the understanding of English presents practically no problem in dealing with the Belgian importer or manufacturer, the situation is reversed when the private consumer or small businessman is involved. To the average Belgian housewife, English is still a language largely unknown. The wise businessman, accordingly, will have his promotional literature, advertising fliers, instructions and other sales aids printed in French or Flemish, as appropriate.

Business correspondence.—Letters posted on the United States east coast require about 8 to 11 days by surface and 3 to 4 days by air for delivery in Belgium. Postage on regular mail (surface letters) is 11 cents per ounce or fraction thereof and 7 cents each additional ounce or fraction. Unsealed surface mail postage is 5 cents for the first 2 ounces or fraction and 3 cents for each additional 2 ounces. Airmail postage is 15 cents per half-ounce and 15 cents each additional half-ounce.

Office hours.—Office hours are generally from 9 a.m. to noon and from 2 p.m. till 6 p.m. Belgian offices are closed on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. Banks are open to the public until 1 p.m. Since the main meal is at mid-day, most offices and many stores are closed for a period of 2 hours at that time; in most instances, however, someone remains on duty. A few department stores recently inaugurated evening hours.

Holidays.—Official holidays in Belgium are: New Year's Day, Easter Monday, May Day (May 1), Ascension Day, Whitmonday, National Holiday (July 21), afternoon of July 22 (in Brussels), Feast of the Assumption (August 15), All Saints' Day (November 1), All Souls' Day (November 2), Armistice Day (November 11), King's Birthday (November 15), Christmas, and December 26. Except in special circumstances, work is not allowed on Sunday and legal holidays.

Weights and measures.—The metric system of weights and measures is used in Belgium.

The monetary unit of Belgium is the Belgian franc with a par value of $0.02 (US$1=50 francs).

[3] See also the publication, *Sources of Credit Information on Foreign Firms*, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1958. 84 pages. 30 cents.

CHAPTER IV

Guidelines for the U.S. Exporter

IN SELLING the Belgian market, there are a number of basic points to check. These fall into two sectors—those in the United States and those in Belgium.

THE APPROACH IN THE UNITED STATES[1]

Services of the U.S. Department of Commerce

The Department of Commerce, both in Washington and through its many Field Offices, offers a number of channels through which the U.S. exporter can approach the foreign market. Through the facilities of the American Foreign Service, the Department receives hundreds of specific inquiries from people abroad, by name, seeking to buy or represent products manufactured in the United States. Each week these are brought to the attention of the exporter through the pages of *International Commerce*, the weekly periodical of the Department.

In the Field Offices and in the Department in Washington, copies of Trade Lists, prepared by the Foreign Service, are available. Trade Lists identify firms handling specific commodities in foreign countries, and cover a wide range of products, trades, and services. These lists contain the basic information needed to locate customers, agents, distributors, licensees, and sources of supply abroad. In addition to a listing of firms, each Trade List contains a summary of basic trade and industry data, a brief analysis of foreign trade in the commodity, government regulations affecting trade, and other useful market data. Lists of importers and dealers indicate the relative size of each firm, method of operation, products handled, territory, and sales force. Lists of exporters and manufacturers indicate relative size or production capacity of each firm and name the products handled. Trade Lists may be purchased from the Commercial Intelligence Division, Bureau of International Commerce, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington 25, D.C., or from the Department's Field Offices for $1 per list.

Complementing the Trade Lists, there are World Trade Directory Reports on each of the listed firms. World Trade Directory Reports contain business particulars on individual foreign firms. These reports supply the detailed information needed to determine the competence and general reliability of specific foreign firms. They are prepared by the American Foreign Service, and represent a consensus of reliable sources of information. If the report on file is more than a year old, a revised current report is prepared without additional charge. The complete name and address of the foreign firm should be given when ordering World Trade Directory Reports. These reports are available to qualified U.S. firms or will be prepared on request through the Commercial Intelligence Division, Bureau of International Commerce, Washington 25, D.C., for $1 each. The reports also may be obtained through the Department's Field Offices.

The Bureau of the Census report, FT 410, available in the Field Offices, chambers of commerce and business libraries, lists U.S. exports by country and shows the volume of goods being shipped to Belgium and other countries. A companion volume, FT 420, represents U.S. exports by com-

[1] See also the publication, *What You Should Know About Exporting. A How-To Get-Started Handbook*, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1962. 38 pages. 25 cents.

modity. These reports show the exporter whether or not his product is presently moving in trade with Belgium.

Trade information may also be obtained from the Department of Commerce in Washington, which has official Belgian publications, regarding Belgium's imports and areas of competition from other countries.

Reports on worldwide activity in specific industries are available from the Department and Field Offices through the many publications of the Business and Defense Services Administration in which are contained readymade analyses.

In the Overseas Business Reports (formerly the World Trade Information Service), are a wide variety of basic and operational information and data connected with Belgium's economy and foreign trade. Information on tariffs and taxes effective in Belgium and import regulations may be obtained from the Department's Bureau of International Commerce.

Foreign trade specialists are available for consultation in Field Offices of the Department of Commerce. Trade specialists are qualified by training and experience to provide expert advice on all phases of foreign commerce. Their services are available through correspondence or personal consultation.

Other Domestic Service Agencies

Many service organizations, such as banks, insurance brokers, transportation agencies, freight forwarders, advertising agencies, and market research organizations, among others, offer specialized services for the exporter. Use of these agencies obviates the necessity for maintaining comparable operations, which for the small and medium business firm could be unduly expensive.

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Washington, D.C., has published a new edition of *Introduction to Doing Export and Import Business*, which is available in local chambers of commerce. This publication is a concise and useful manual with a wealth of helpful suggestions on almost every aspect of foreign trade.

From the above sources, the exporter can acquire a substantial collection of reference material to help him determine whether his product can be sold on the Belgian market. Not only will it serve the newcomer but it will continue to help after he has entered the exporting business.

THE APPROACH IN BELGIUM

The exporter's investigation on the domestic front completes half the job. He must then acquaint himself with some important considerations in meeting the Belgian market.

Investigation of the Market

As in the United States, the U.S. exporter entering the Belgian market should take advantage of the tools available to him. Because of the nature of his product, a detailed research of the market may first be found desirable. A number of firms in Belgium engage in this service and may be contacted through the appropriate Trade Lists.

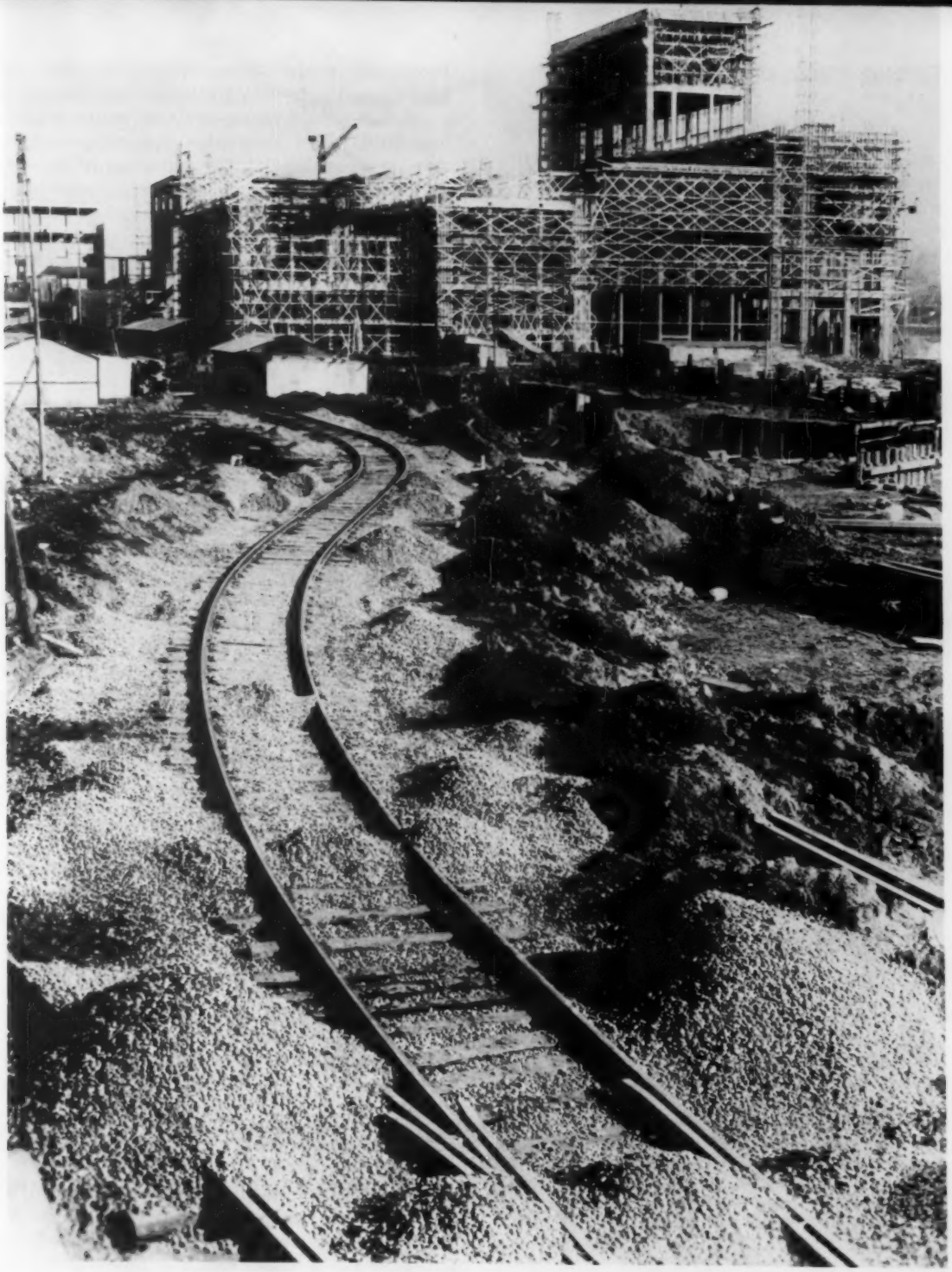
The help of specialized organizations in Belgium is available to the businessman to formulate an advertising campaign and to select the most effective form of advertising media. These organizations include advertising agencies and brokers, public relations firms, outdoor and billboard firms, and motion-picture screen advertising firms.

Chambers of Commerce

The facilities of the Belgian chambers of commerce should not be overlooked in making contact with prospective purchasers and distributors. Close contact with member firms is maintained by these chambers and new and profitable prospects can be developed for the sale of American goods.

Trade Fairs

The number of general and specialized trade fairs exhibiting in Belgium offer an effective channel for the exporter to introduce his products directly to firms interested in purchasing and handling distribution. Many of the general fairs are open to the public, giving an opportunity to test popular reaction to the goods.



Courtesy International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Powerplant under construction near Liège.

Exchange of Information

Close contact between the American principal and his Belgian distributor is desirable and should be developed. While mail and telephonic communications suffice in most instances, the understanding which is developed through personal visits finds no substitute. Business problems and questions can be resolved quickly rather than in terms of weeks.

Close contact can keep the distributor apprised of new developments respecting the product and its promotion. Similarly, the U.S. businessman is kept acquainted with developments in the foreign field. One American company, relaxing its contact with an agent, suffered a serious downturn in business which required almost 2 years to rebuild to its former position. Checking frequently with the agent and servicing his needs would have prevented this loss.

Increasingly, U.S. producers are bringing members of their distributing firms to the United States for training. The expense involved has been considered minor in view of the benefits reaped. Such training periods usually run from 2 to 4 weeks, during which time the Belgian distributor and/or members of his organization are acquainted with factory production methods, sales techniques, service functions, and methods of operating the American business. Companies maintaining such training programs report that this instruction is translated into complete familiarity with the product and generates genuine enthusiasm for it by the time the Belgian students return to their homeland. This knowledge and enthusiasm, in turn, is transmitted to the remainder of the distributor's organization and results in greater sales. Firms contemplating the introduction of a training program should have French- or Flemish-speaking instructors to obtain maximum effectiveness from the course.

TRADE LISTS PROVIDE NAMES OF FIRMS IN BELGIUM

Names and addresses of principal importers, producers, processors, wholesalers, and distributors in Belgium, grouped by individual commodities and industries, are provided in the Trade List available on Belgium from the Department of Commerce. Information about size and type of operations and the sales territory covered also is included.

TRADE LISTS may be purchased from the Commercial Intelligence Division, Bureau of International Commerce, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington 25, D.C., or from the Department's Field Offices for $1 per list.

Delivery Dates

In selling abroad, not only does the U.S. exporter have his funds committed, but the Belgian importer is also financially involved. As a consequence, to keep a satisfied customer or distributor, it is imperative to meet obligations. Close attention should be paid to delivery dates and terms. Failure to do so can cost the importer money and even open the door to competitors who are more circumspect. On the other hand, an effort to meet delivery obligations, even by use of air shipments in exceptional cases, will result in a satisfied distributor and, most important, a satisfied customer who cannot help but be impressed by American efforts to meet the challenge of competition.

Price Quotations

In these days of stiffening competition, more and more potential foreign customers are insisting on c.i.f. price quotations. Since most U.S. manufacturers are accustomed to quote only f.o.b. prices in the domestic market, this has created a real barrier to foreign trade. The U.S. firm which wishes to sell abroad is making efforts to give c.i.f. quotations, realizing that the f.o.b. price (especially from the interior of the United States) is not meaningful to the potential Belgian importer.

Packaging

The American manufacturer is accustomed to shipping by domestic freight services where packing can be light weight and damage from handling is held to a minimum. Ocean shipping, however, presents additional and unique problems. Because of increased handling and the possibilities

of sustaining water damage, proper packing is most essential. Substantial crates, boxes, and other packing, heavy enough to stand severe shock and rough handling and resistant to water and moisture, must be used. Goods properly packed by the exporter or by a reliable forwarding firm will arrive in good condition ready for sale.

Belgian regulations require some products to have special indications or notices on shipments. Information on such marking or labeling may be obtained from the Department of Commerce's Bureau of International Commerce.

Servicing

Certain products and equipment entail servicing to maintain them during their useful life. The exporter should make provision for establishing such servicing facilities by qualified personnel. Training of the distributor and key members of his team, as noted above, provides a built-in maintenance function. Some large companies have found it profitable to maintain a separate engineering staff, located in a centrally situated city, whose job it is to service equipment over wide areas and instruct local technicians in coping with out-of-the-ordinary problems. Personnel so trained frequently handle routine problems without recourse to the engineering staff.

Other Considerations

Belgium uses the metric system of weights and measures. Measuring and registering devices, gauges, and similar units on machinery and equipment should be calibrated to the metric system. The need to convert from the English to the metric system means slowed production and the possible introduction of errors in calculation leading to ruined work, lost material, and an unsatisfied customer.

In addition to the many engineering manuals containing conversions and conversion formulae, a handy publication in the field is issued by the National Bureau of Standards. Entitled *Units of Weight and Measure (United States Customary and Metric)—Definitions and Tables of Equivalents*, Miscellaneous Publication 233, December 20, 1960, it is available for 40 cents through the Department of Commerce Field Offices or from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C.

For the foreign market, U.S. electrical equipment and motors must be adapted to the local current. Alternating current is most generally used but direct current is also used in some cities. Voltages vary between cities and the current is 50 cycles. The characteristics of electric current in Belgian cities are contained in a booklet, *Electric Current Abroad*, published by the Department for the information of manufacturers and exporters.

English is rather widely understood in the Belgian business community and its use in business correspondence presents little problem.

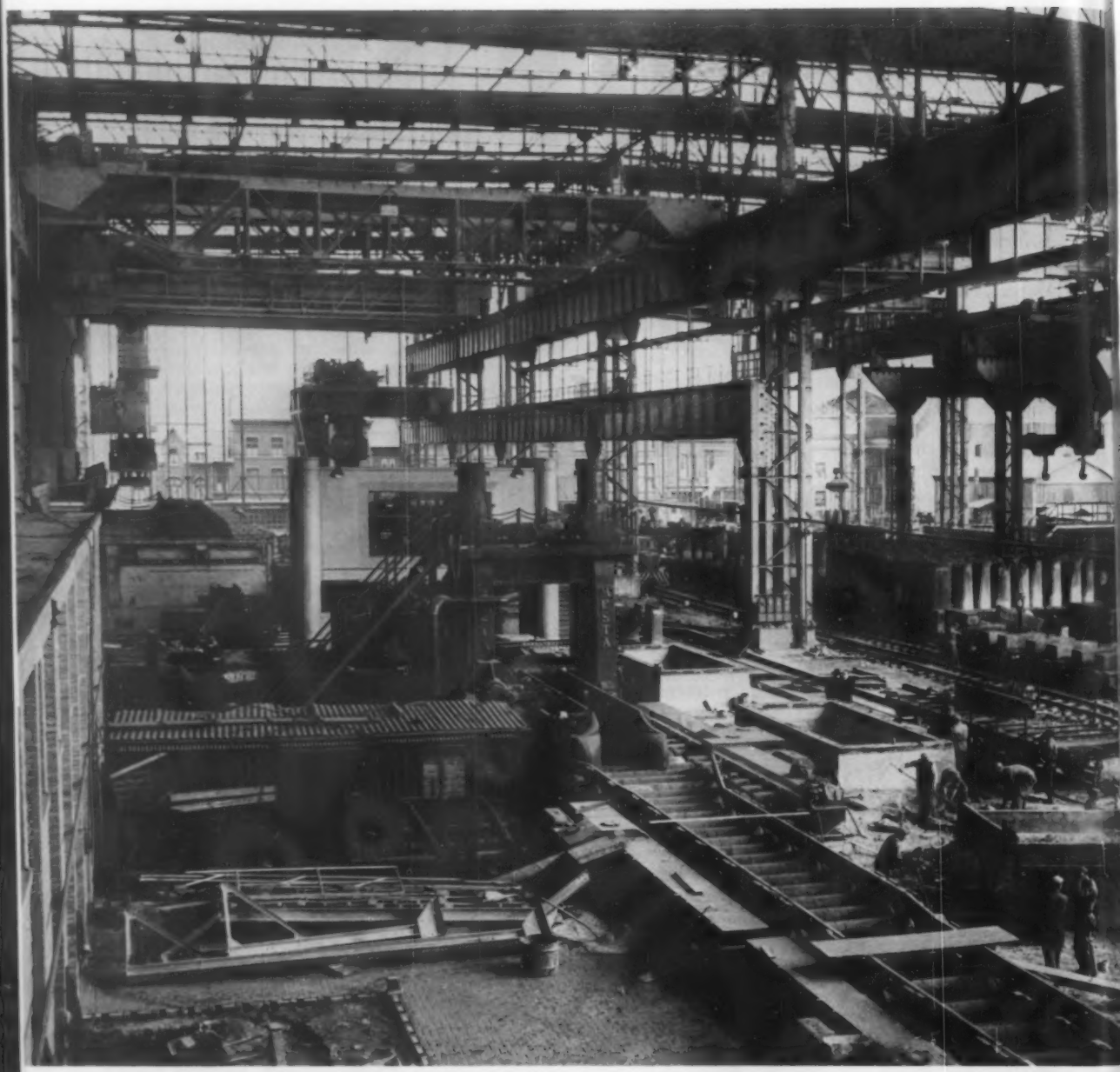
Belgium is bilingual, with French spoken in the southern and eastern sectors of the country and Flemish in the northern and western areas. Although English can be used in business correspondence, the Belgian housewife, small retailer, artificer, technician, and production worker, however, is not so well acquainted with English. The use of the local languages, therefore, is a must in promotional literature, advertising, recipes, mixing directions, and in instructions for assembling, installing, maintenance, and use of equipment, machinery, appliances and other products.

WTD REPORTS HELP IN SELECTING REPRESENTATIVES AND TRADING PARTNERS

Information on private firms in Belgium is available to U.S. businessmen through World Trade Directory (WTD) reports.

WTD reports include such information as type of organization, sales territory, lines of goods handled, operation methods, size of business, capital, sales volume, trade and financial reputation, and other business information.

These reports are available to qualified U.S. firms or will be prepared on request through the Commercial Intelligence Division, Bureau of International Commerce, U.C. Department of Commerce, Washington 25, D.C., for $1 each. The reports also may be obtained through the Department's Field Offices.



Courtesy International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Flourishing steel industry offers possible market for U.S. equipment. Shown above is a run-out table at Ougree.

CHAPTER V

Market Analysis for Selected Commodities

THIS CHAPTER deals with the market potentials in Belgium for a number of U.S. products. It is based on an on-the-spot survey in which interviews were held with a large number of Belgian businessmen concerned with foreign trade. Many of the opinions expressed were ones on which there was general agreement, but there were also conflicting ideas.

The purpose of this product review is to indicate areas in which exports can be increased and to single out special trade problems. Successful export expansion, however, requires greater selling effort by the U.S. manufacturer and his agents, and more flexibility by U.S. industry to adapt itself to the changing conditions of the Belgian market.

The list of commodities considered is by no means exclusive. Responsible business circles point out that in view of the great prosperity within the country and the very liberal Belgian trade policy a more diversified range of U.S. commodities might be sold provided that a number of obstacles can be eliminated.

In the field of consumer goods, especially, U.S. exports face strong competition, both from Belgian producers and from third countries. The cost of many U.S. consumer items limits their possibilities. Nevertheless, many varieties of U.S. consumer goods are stocked and are sold and many more could be sold because of their quality, design, novelty, or appeal as status symbols.

FOODSTUFFS

The Belgian public is especially attentive to foodstuffs. Price differentials may not be decisive if the quality of the food appeals to the Belgian housewife. More recently, attractively packaged foods have gained an increasing acceptance. Retailers expressed opinions that specialty canned fruit and canned juices could be sold in greater quantities if a stronger promotional effort were made. Belgians are big consumers of tomato juice. Vegetable juices with a tomato base have been enthusiastically received by Belgian guests in American homes, and it is fair to assume that

Steel works at Athus, Belgium.

Courtesy Belgian Trade Review

Refining installations at Antwerp.

Courtesy International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

such juices would be accorded wide acceptance if available in the market. Interest has been expressed in the importation of American wines and alcoholic beverages.

The Belgian market has some dog foods but none to equal the American products in this line. Belgians own a great number of dogs (nearly one to a family) and they are cared for as a member of the family. The well-planned nutritious dog foods offered by American companies, both canned and otherwise, should have strong appeal.

Frozen and Convenience Foods

Frozen foods, including vegetables, ready-to-cook foods, and precooked foods, have only recently appeared on the Belgian market, and certain consumer habits and food prejudices must be overcome. As supermarkets and shopping centers develop and as home refrigeration becomes more widespread, sales of these lines of U.S. goods may well be expanded. It would be advisable to demonstrate in supermarkets and major department stores how to prepare and serve such frozen foods, with samples offered to customers to show the quality and flavor of the U.S. product.

Frozen fruit, such as peaches, pears, pineapple, and citrus fruit, as well as juices and juice mixtures, are rather new to the Belgian market but should find ready acceptance with the proper sales campaign. Large American shrimps are not generally known but also should find buyers if necessary promotional efforts are made. Frozen U.S. turkeys could be of particular importance in the hotel trade.

Courtesy Belgian Embassy

Frozen food display in Brussels supermarket.

Recent promotional efforts have been effective in introducing frozen chickens to a limited sector of the Benelux market. In view of the favorable reception accorded these products, further promotion should develop an increasing market. Inquiries have been made regarding shipments of frozen meats for reexport to the Congo.

Negative factors to be considered are limited distribution systems for frozen foods and the scarcity of refrigerated trucks. If these difficulties can be overcome—as experience in the United States and elsewhere demonstrates it can be—the outlook for U.S. frozen foods seems to be promising.

Prepared or semiprepared foods, "convenience foods," also show good possibilities for expansion—in particular, prepared cake mixes, bread and roll mixes, puddings, gelatine desserts, baby foods, and so-called instant foods. The rising cost of domestic help, as well as the increasing number of married women holding jobs, are factors in breaking down consumer resistance to these foods. American firms attempting to enter this market or expand their lines, however, may expect fairly rapid duplication either by Belgian or other Common Market firms, especially in the Netherlands.

Directions for use of frozen foods or convenience foods should be in both the French and Flemish languages. The same holds true for recipe booklets packed with such food items.

HOME APPLIANCES

Refrigerators and Freezers

Although the design, quality, and utility of U.S. home appliances compare favorably with either Belgian products or products imported from other countries, the price of these appliances usually is a deterrent to increased sales. Furthermore, U.S. units customarily are larger than the European manufactured product and create problems in view of the limited space available in the Belgian home.

The type of refrigerators customarily used in the United States are not now within the price

Courtesy Belgian Trade Review

Modern air-conditioned textile mill at Bruges.

range of the general public in Belgium. The price of an 11-cubic foot model is about $550; both its price and its size make it unattractive for all except the fairly wealthy householders. On the other hand, many Belgians are just acquiring their first refrigerators, usually 3- to 4-cubic foot models costing from $120 to $180. Models within this price range and size at present find greater acceptance in Belgium, but demand for larger sizes may well go up as the general standard of living increases.

The size of U.S. freezers, as well as price, presents a problem although Belgian businessmen agree that the U.S. product surpasses its European counterpart in every other way. European models are said to be less effective than U.S. models and almost as expensive. Smaller U.S. freezers seem to have a good present potential particularly as many Belgians have gardens and want to preserve garden produce by more efficient methods.

Ranges

The most promising items in this group seem to be smaller and inexpensive U.S. gas stoves with simple controls, which are judged to be definitely superior to almost anything presently available in Belgium. Electric stoves, on the other hand, are priced mostly out of range of the Belgian buyer. Furthermore, the price of electricity in Belgium is much higher than that of cooking gas.

Washers and Dryers

There are French semiautomatic machines on the Belgian market which are doing reasonably well although they sell between $350 and $650 a unit. U.S. semiautomatic washers should, therefore, also have a fairly good market. On the other hand, completely automatic washers are not yet within the range of the average Belgian consumer. Dishwashing machines are still very much a novelty, and the prices of U.S. products are again out of range. Smaller and cheaper U.S. units, however, may find acceptance. It was suggested that such models might be produced under American licenses either in Belgium or in one of the neighboring Common Market countries.

Although the damp climate makes the drying of clothing a difficult task, the use of dryers is very limited. Effective salesmanship could create a substantial market for this equipment.

Interest in dehumidifiers could be aroused in the case of commercial and industrial enterprises, hospitals, banks, various archives, and possibly residential dwellings.

Small Household Appliances

In spite of considerably higher prices than those of competing European products, American design and quality are recognized in this field and have

resulted in some export sales. With additional promotion efforts this market was deemed to be quite promising. The U.S. appliances should be adapted to 110/220, 50-cycle current, and heating elements should be adapted to a current of less than 6 amperes.

CLOTHING AND TEXTILES

There is still rather a narrow market for some types of women's clothes, but the market is growing. U.S. women's ready-to-wear in the past has not sold well because of preference for French styling. Department store buyers, however, felt that with proper sales effort and in view of U.S. quality, popularly priced lines could move in greater quantities. This holds particularly good for U.S. women's sport, play, and casual clothing, which is considered to be comfortable and of good appearance.

The results of the seventh annual "Le Salon Européen du Prêt-à-Porter Feminin" (Ladies' Ready-to-Wear Exhibition) in Brussels tend to strengthen this viewpoint. Attendance at this show has almost doubled each succeeding year of the last few years. In 1962 not only Belgian attendance but foreign attendance increased almost 100 percent over 1961.

Baby's clothes, diapers, and articles for baby's needs, e.g., safety pins, blankets, toilet seats, and powder, have possibilities for development.

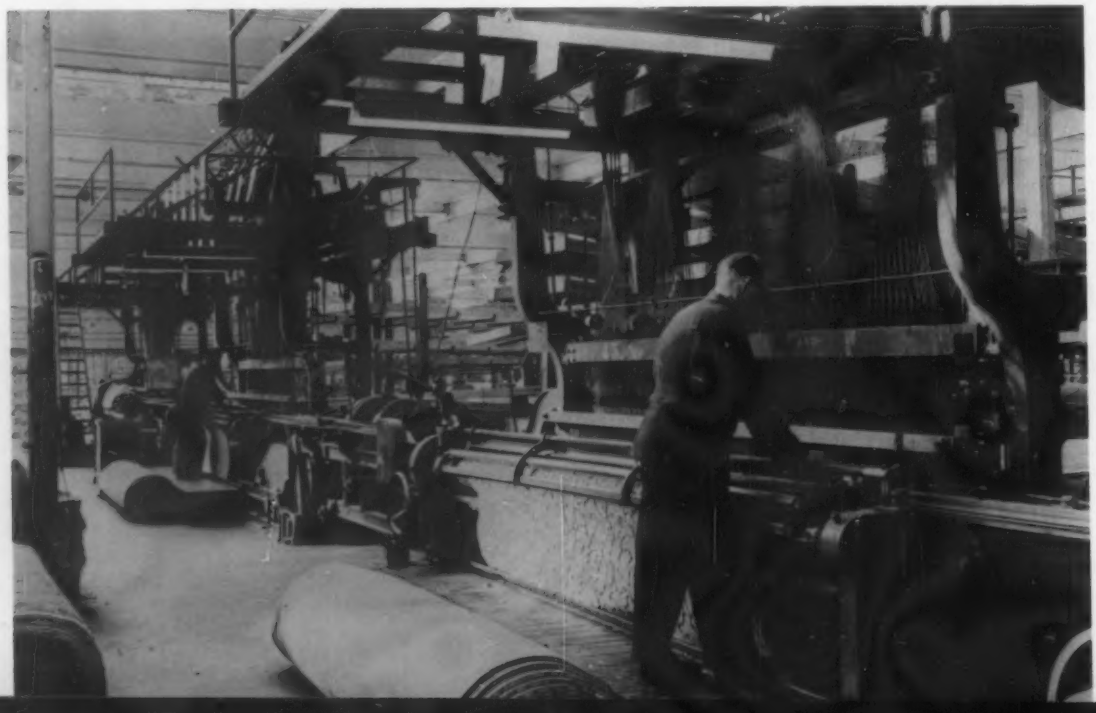
An expanding market may be possible for men's medium-weight suits and coats, especially the so-called wrinkle-free suits. Wash-and-wear clothing has begun to appear on the Belgian market and has found good acceptance with possibilities for further expansion. Other interesting items are lingerie, nylon stockings, men's stretch socks, sport shirts, and slacks. In view of Belgium's climate, all kinds of rainwear offer possibilities. There is also some demand for shoes, sandals, and wearing apparel suitable for reexport to the Congo.

Decorator fabrics for curtains, drapes, and upholstering are in demand. Fabrics, particularly of nylon, cotton, and rayon, for shirting, ladies underwear, dresses, blouses, and dressing gowns have a ready market potential.

Netherlands competition in this field is formidable, especially since Netherlands goods can enter the Belgian market free of import duty. Furthermore, novelty items are usually quickly duplicated by Dutch manufacturers. Nevertheless, U.S. clothing frequently is a sort of status symbol, which makes it salable despite higher prices which sometimes are due to extremely high retail markups.

Belgian carpets are known throughout the world.

Courtesy Belgian Embassy



Courtesy Official Belgian Tourist Bureau

Venerable lacemaker demonstrates the ancient technique of lacemaking—an art now fast disappearing from the Belgian scene.

Courtesy International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Excavator makes a 7-meter cut in one run in canal construction.

MACHINERY AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT

Earthmoving, Materials-Handling, and Farming Equipment

Heavy earthmoving and materials-handling equipment is still not produced on a large scale in Western Europe. It has been pointed out that the quality and serviceability of such European equipment is inferior to that originating in the United States. The market for this type of heavy equipment has been mentioned as one being susceptible to further expansion, but little hope is held for exports of U.S. lighter equipment in this category or farm machinery. Such equipment is locally produced or assembled and is also imported from neighboring countries. The U.S. product is said to be noncompetitive price-wise. Furthermore, in the heavy equipment class, servicing facilities set up by the U.S. exporter are said to be indispensable if sales are to increase.

Machine Tools

The commonly used types of machine tools either are produced locally or are being imported from neighboring countries, mainly because the price of similar U.S. tools is said to be too high. Only special types of machine tools manufactured solely in the United States and items protected by U.S. patents will continue to sell well in Belgium, trade sources seem to believe.

Electrical Equipment

A good market exists for U.S. electric specialties, such as electric and pneumatic-electric control units for machinery, thermostats, and timing devices. The superior quality and performance of U.S. equipment has built a strong preference, despite costs which for some items were said to range considerably higher than the price of comparable goods imported from other sources. If lower prices were possible, this market could be developed much more intensely. Electronic items were also considered to have a promising future. The widespread and rapid acceptance of television

Courtesy International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Bucket excavator digging out new canal.

and industrial use of cathode tube equipment has created a demand for electron guns for cathode tubes.

Refrigerating and freezing equipment.—Belgium appears to be a promising market for commercial refrigerating and freezing equipment. However, units should be adapted to the local electric current conditions. The development of supermarkets and good prospects for the expansion of frozen food sales necessitates greater freezer storage capacity, freezer display equipment, and quick freezing facilities for the processing of locally produced foods. The majority of grocery stores, confectionary shops and pastry shops, and a large number of meat shops do not have refrigerating equipment or refrigerated showcases. With the American lead in the production of these items, a substantial market could be developed. Again, adequate servicing facilities for these items within Belgium are a must.

Packaging Machinery

Considerable interest was expressed by Belgian retailers, as well as manufacturers, for more attractive packaging materials to be used in sales promotion and for strong, light packaging materials for the commercial shipment of goods. New and modern packaging machinery and materials, beer cases and other containers seem, therefore, to have possibilities in the Belgian market. Also, there may be opportunities to export more efficient food-processing machinery as the domestic consumer accepts more prepared and processed food.

CHEMICALS AND ALLIED PRODUCTS

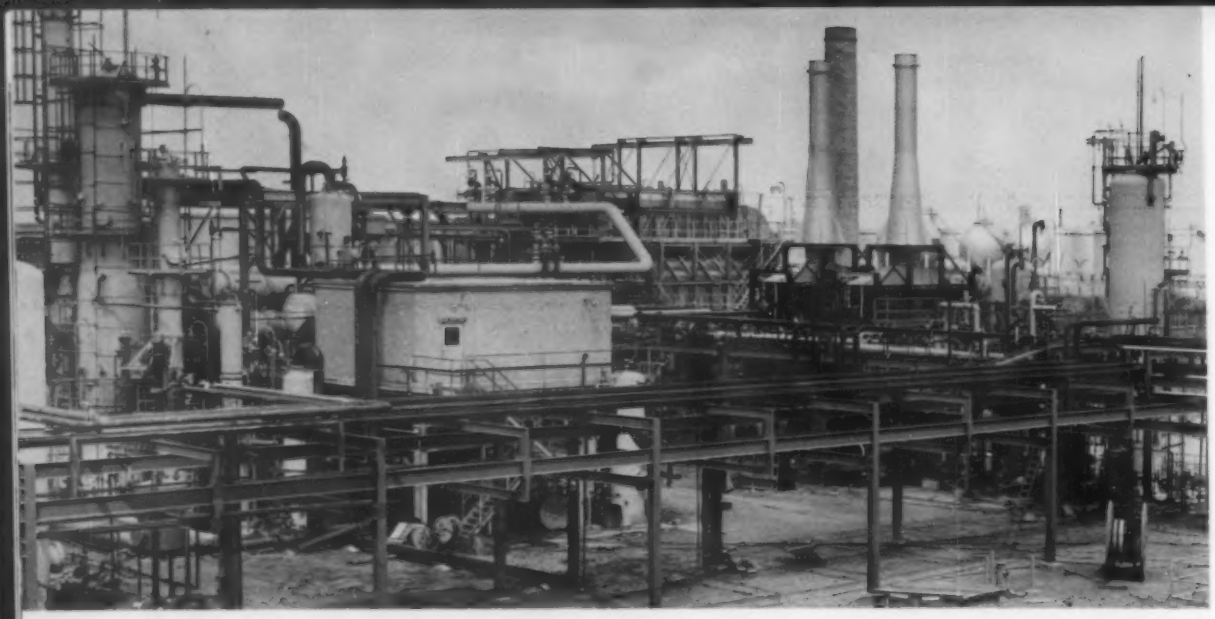
Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals

Since the Belgian and other Western European chemical industries are formidable competitors, standard chemicals from the United States will not have an easy market. Chemical specialties, on the other hand, possess good potentials.

In the pharmaceutical field, a similar situation prevails. U.S. additives to make pharmaceutical compounds more effective and pharmaceuticals produced primarily in the United States should continue to find a market.

Plastics and Rubber

The ordinary types of plastics are now produced in abundance in Belgium. However, good possibilities are seen for special-purpose plastics, artificial leather made of plastics, and plastic novelty items. Also, plastic kits for making model automobiles, planes, space vehicles, trains, ships, and



Courtesy Belgian Trade Review

Petrochemical plant.

similar items are growing in popularity among hobbyists. Articles of novel design are, nevertheless, subject to reproduction, usually within a year by European manufacturers. There is also a demand for special dyes and pigments for plastics and synthetic textiles.

New types of synthetic rubber and new rubber products such as hygienic articles can readily be sold when properly marketed.

BUILDING MATERIALS

In view of the lively industrial and residential construction activity, U.S. building products which are unique or in which the United States is specialized will find a ready market. Examples of such items are new or specialty floor, wall, and ceiling coverings, insulating materials, and building components and fittings. Although most of the builder's hardware sold in Belgium is produced in Europe, especially in Germany, innovations of good quality and reasonable price have market possibilities. In this respect it may also be advisable for manufacturers of construction materials to investigate the market potentials of products not necessarily considered new in the United States but, as yet, not introduced to the Belgian building trades.

House paint from the United States is already fairly well represented and, with the growth of the "do-it-yourself" movement, is expected by Belgian businessmen to have greater potentialities. Water heaters and area heating devices also are said to have good sales possibilities provided economy of use and efficient operation can be demonstrated. Some demand has been noted for modern bathtubs and bathroom fixtures.

Building maintenance equipment, e.g., scaffolding, and modern painting and sanding equipment, of American design has attracted some building construction firms.

Again, Belgian businessmen stress the importance of using both French and Flemish in the directions accompanying building materials, coverings, and hardware, either on the outer packaging or on separate leaflets. Sizes and quantities should be expressed in the metric system.

In early 1960, the National Building Center was opened in Antwerp, financed by contributions of local members of the building and construction industries. Display space was provided to the subscribers free of charge for a 2-year period. The Center's plans call for expansion of its activities and its program for exhibitions when display space is placed on a revenue-producing basis. Since membership in the Center includes a large number of Belgian architects and builders, it should offer a profitable point of contact for U.S. firms.

MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS

Greeting cards, especially Christmas cards, are taking hold in the Belgian market and there also appears to be good prospects for novelty stationery items. Belgian importers have expressed interest in foil-covered, waterproof, and other fantasy-type labels.

Packaged cake and other food mixes are just entering Belgium, especially via the supermarket stores springing up throughout the country. There are, however, few proper-size cooking pans on sale for these mixes since the great majority are the regular Belgian-size and, therefore, too large. An enterprising exporter could develop a sizable market in these items. Toys and stuffed plush animals for small children, phonograph records and recording tape, and garden sprayers also have sales potentials.

Interest has been expressed in enameled ware, such as buckets and washbasins, and in portable radios and phonographs for export to the Congo. Trade opportunities exist for cosmetics, perfumes, toiletries, and all types of cosmetologists' supplies. Florist ribbons and specialty leathers and skins bear investigation.

Printing and duplicating equipment and materials used by printers, screen printers, advertising agencies, and firms with their own printing services, forestry tools, e.g., chain saws and new types of forestry equipment, filtering equipment such as used in metalworking plants and paint factories, and precision measuring and optical equipment and gauges provide export possibilities.

Interest is growing in the use of nonslip coatings and metal coverings on stairs, decks, catwalks, and similar passageways where moisture or other conditions create hazards to personnel.

With only one large Belgian chemical firm manufacturing adhesives, domestic production is inadequate and not in a position to supply the full range of adhesives required in the Belgian market. Although these products are now extensively imported from the United States (and from other Western European countries as well), the U.S. share of the market can be expanded.

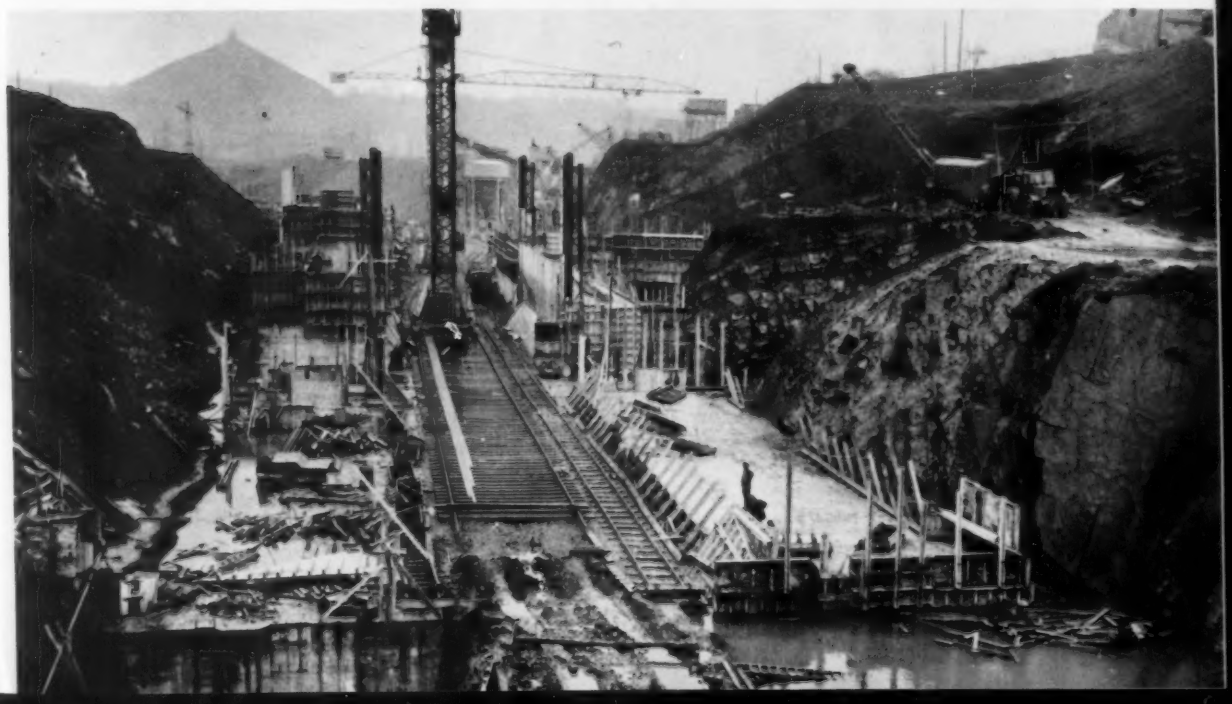
Tools and appliances for doing small jobs in the home find ready acceptance. Several lines of U.S. power handtools are already being manufactured in Belgium, and imports from European countries sell well. Supplementary equipment and accessories for "do-it-yourself" tools are believed to have a promising market.

Machines and apparatus developed for use in education and teaching fields in the United States have been suggested as having special possibilities.

Hot beverage dispensers appeal to the Belgian public and could be distributed widely.

Construction work offers potential sales opportunities for material and equipment.

Courtesy International Bank for Reconstruction and Development



Courtesy of National Geographic Magazine © National Geographic Society

Slag dumps of coal mines rear their heads over the western outskirts of Liège. The Meuse River in the foreground is a major artery of commerce.

Courtesy of National Geographic Magazine © National Geographic Society

Flax workers between Meuen and Ypres harvest crop for Belgian linen industry.

APPENDIX A

Notes for Business Travelers[1]

GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

The Kingdom of Belgium has an area of 11,775 square miles, a frontier of 896 miles, and seaboard of 39 miles. It is bound on the north by the Netherlands, on the south by France, on the east by the Federal Republic of Germany and Luxembourg, and on the west by the North Sea.

Belgium is a hereditary constitutional monarchy. The political organization and practices of the country are democratic, and the Constitution contains numerous safeguards of individual liberty. The Belgian Parliament consists of a Senate and Chamber of Representatives, whose Members are elected for 4 years. Parliament may be dissolved for new elections before the expiration of term. A part of the Senate is elected indirectly whereas some members of the Senate and all members of the Chamber are elected by direct vote. Voting is compulsory in Belgium. Most of the political interest and activity are centered in the Chamber.

The present Belgian Government, formed in April 1961, is a coalition of the Social Christian and Socialist parties. In the Cabinet, the Social Christian Party has 11 portfolios while the Socialists have 9. In the 212-member Chamber of Representatives, the Social Christians won 96 seats in the March 25, 1961, elections; the Socialists, 84; the Liberals, 20; the Popular Union, 5; the Communists, 5; and the Independents, 2. In the Senate, the Social Christian Party gained 79 of the 175 seats; the Socialist Party, 75; Liberal Party, 18; Popular Union, 2; Communist Party, 1.

[1] Additional details on living costs and conditions may be found in *Living Conditions in Belgium*, World Trade Information Service, part 2, No. 61-13, March 1961.

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

The climate is cool, temperate, and rainy, being slightly less cool and rainy near the coast. Brussels has a mean temperature of 50°F. (summer 65°, winter 37°).

HEALTH CONDITIONS, MEDICAL FACILITIES

Belgian public health standards are equivalent to those of the United States. Epidemic diseases are rare. Sinus infection, colds, and bronchitis are common in the winter. The Belgian climate is sometimes uncomfortable for persons suffering from sinus conditions and respiratory ailments. The principal causes of mortality are heart disease, cancer, and tuberculosis. It is recommended that persons coming to Belgium be immunized against smallpox, typhoid, and paratyphoid.

Belgian medical services are generally good; a number of English-speaking physicians are available in both Antwerp and Brussels. Medical facilities in Brussels are excellent though not so complete in all respects as in large American cities. Several hospitals and private clinics are equipped with modern diagnostic laboratories. Doctors charge from $6 to $10 for a house visit; an office visit will range from $4 to $7.

Hospital costs range from $5.50 to $7 per day in a ward with meals included, and from $8 to $15 for a private room. Surgeons' fees for an appendectomy vary from $130 to $160. Dentists' fees for a filling are about $6 and for an extraction, $5; the fee for an X-ray is $5. Medical supplies and medicines are plentiful but often expensive. A limited variety of imported patent medicines is available.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Housing is relatively expensive in Belgium. The country's hotel facilities, particularly during the height of the tourist season, are strained to capacity, and reservations should be made in advance. In cities such as Brussels and Antwerp, rates in the best hotels for a single room with bath and continental breakfast range from $6 to $13, doubles from $9 to $19; with all meals furnished, singles range from $10 to $19, and doubles from $16 to $31. In average hotels, rates for a single room with bath and continental breakfast range from $5 to $7.50, and doubles from $7 to $11; with all meals furnished, singles range from $10 to $12, and doubles from $17 to $18. Single rooms with bath in average hotels range from $4.50 to $7 and doubles from $6.50 to $8. A tax of 6 percent is collected on room rent only, while a service charge of 15 percent is placed on the total.

FOOD AND CLOTHING

Generally speaking, the Belgians earn a good living and appreciate the good things in life. They like good food and eat well. Accordingly, one finds in Belgium a large number of restaurants and eating places, varying from deluxe establishments to snack bars. The better restaurants in Brussels are considerably more expensive than the average American restaurant, although portions served are appreciably larger. The food is good and the French cuisine is favored. There are, however, many small restaurants providing good meals at prices comparable to similar places in American cities.

The climate is somewhat similar to that of the northeastern United States, but with more rainfall and fewer extremes in temperature. Winter-weight suits are worn practically the whole year. For a man, a heavy winter coat, a raincoat, and a lightweight topcoat are recommended; a warm fur coat is desirable for a woman.

Wool dresses are worn throughout the year. Two-piece suits in worsted, gabardine, and flannel are indispensable. Sweaters, scarves, gloves, rain shoes, and raincoats are prerequisites for an adequate Brussels wardrobe, and crepe shoes are useful as they permit keeping feet dry without bothering with rubbers. Summer clothing in the American sense (cottons and light silks) is not necessary, although some such clothing should be brought along in anticipation of travel in the southern European countries. Inasmuch as many streets and sidewalks are of cobblestone, it is useful for women to have some sturdy walking shoes.

Children need adequate woolen clothing. Their wardrobes should include long woolen socks, heavy shoes, woolen skirts and trousers, hats with earflaps, scarves, and gloves. Crepe or other thick-soled shoes are useful. Such clothing is available in Belgium, but is more expensive than in the United States.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Local urban transportation has been developed to a high degree. Commuter trains, streetcars, and buses provide competent service. Fares are somewhat lower than in comparable American cities. Taxicab rates are about the same as in the United States. Minimum taxi fare for one passenger is 10 francs (20 cents) with a trip of 2 kilometers (1¼ miles) costing 24 francs (48 cents). There is a mandatory tip of 10 francs on all fares from the minimum up to 50 francs ($1); over 50 francs, a tip of 20 to 25 percent is given.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Every traveler must be in possession of a valid passport. Belgium has no vaccination requirements. Certain vaccinations, however, are recommended or required by the United States for Americans traveling abroad. Since the regulations governing these requirements may change with prevailing conditons, anyone contemplating a trip abroad should obtain the latest information from the Division of Foreign Quarantine, U.S. Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D.C., or from any local facility of the Service.

A Belgian visa is not required for those U.S. visitors who stay for a period not exceeding 3 months but is required for students and other persons who intend to remain in Belgium more than 3 months. Regulations governing travel within the Benelux countries were relaxed July 1, 1960, under the provisions of a Benelux Convention abolishing the control over the movements of persons at the internal frontiers. Since then, foreigners entering any one of the three Benelux countries may move about freely in the three countries during a fixed period.

APPENDIX B

Selected Economic Data

Table 1.—Population by Age and Sex, December 31, 1960

Age	Men	Women	Total
Less than 5 years	384,875	368,294	753,169
5 up to 15 years	720,938	698,737	1,419,675
15 up to 25 years	563,874	555,876	1,119,750
25 up to 45 years	1,227,181	1,207,019	2,434,200
45 up to 65 years	1,137,078	1,214,803	2,351,881
65 up to 75 years	310,436	406,960	717,396
75 up to 85 years	134,096	193,435	328,131
85 and over	18,744	35,208	53,952
Total	4,497,822	4,680,332	9,178,154

Source: *Bulletin de Statistique*, National Institute of Statistics.

Table 2.—Economically Active Population by Industry Grouping, December 31, 1961

Industry	Number of persons[1]	Percent of total
Total active population [2]	3,525,000	100.0
Agriculture	250,000	7.1
Extractive industries	114,000	3.2
Manufacturing	1,241,000	35.2
Building and constructing	250,000	7.1
Transportation	242,000	6.9
Commerce, banking insurance, and services	1,333,000	37.8
Completely unemployed	95,000	2.7

[1] Provisional data.
[2] Includes unemployed; excludes Armed Forces.

Source: *National Bank Bulletin*, Brussels.

Table 3.—Belgium-Luxembourg: Imports of Select Commodity Groups, Total and From the United States, 1960–61

[1,000 francs]

Commodity	1960			1961		
	Total imports	Imports from United States	U.S. imports as percent of total	Total imports	Imports from United States	U.S. imports as percent of total
Total imports	197,854,430	19,551,269	9.9	210,951,736	18,740,350	8.9
Edible fruits and fruit peel	2,201,964	203,398	9.23	2,518,043	311,772	12.4
Grains	5,993,340	2,533,207	42.26	5,731,675	2,269,060	39.6
Wheat	1,306,445	220,193	16.85	1,716,173	476,326	27.8
Barley	940,677	195,596	20.79	968,891	65,042	6.7
Corn	1,629,709	621,100	38.11	1,429,195	655,786	45.9
Grain sorghums, dari, millet, and similar	1,483,840	1,383,506	93.23	1,150,321	951,492	82.7
Oleaginous fruits and seeds; fruits and seeds for planting; industrial and medicinal plants; straw and forage	2,189,947	800,682	36.56	2,274,248	536,729	23.6
Animal and vegetable fats and oils and products thereof	1,822,554	261,608	14.35	1,469,079	119,494	8.1
Vegetable and fruit preparations	714,595	273,855	38.32	784,598	284,954	36.3
Food industry residues and wastes; prepared animal foods	2,007,830	256,438	12.77	1,890,970	187,499	9.9
Tobacco	1,516,467	465,448	30.69	1,605,017	460,378	28.7
Mineral fuels; petroleum products; bitumens and waxes	19,881,272	1,179,397	5.93	20,590,725	1,055,971	5.1
Inorganic chemicals; compounds of precious metals, radioactive elements, and rare earths	1,372,620	220,122	16.03	1,446,366	257,209	17.8
Organic chemicals	2,303,709	666,231	28.91	2,394,135	728,414	30.4
Pharmaceutical products	1,538,003	316,776	20.59	1,351,485	242,945	18.0
Artificial resins, plastics, and products	2,620,511	399,474	15.24	3,010,065	305,620	10.2
Natural and synthetic rubber and products	2,460,337	256,826	10.43	2,522,962	320,821	12.7
Paper materials, paper, and products	6,292,466	347,098	5.51	6,927,391	356,816	5.2
Manmade textile and products	2,630,789	231,678	8.80	3,394,736	364,726	10.7
Cotton and products	5,126,872	1,559,728	30.42	5,052,797	1,421,668	28.1
Raw cotton	3,126,814	1,387,774	44.38	3,042,115	1,292,678	44.5
Iron and steel, and products	8,600,017	312,453	3.63	9,627,239	264,702	2.7
Copper and products	9,757,376	239,956	2.45	9,576,922	101,480	1.1
Machinery and industrial equipment	15,890,243	2,327,655	14.64	18,354,686	2,873,773	15.7
Electric machinery and apparatus	6,542,793	520,563	7.95	7,831,319	608,273	7.8
Automotive vehicles and tractors	14,354,887	1,273,082	8.86	15,405,206	1,134,099	7.4
Aircraft and parts	2,432,336	1,641,231	67.47	3,123,935	996,658	31.9
Scientific, medical, and precision instruments and apparatus	1,649,174	241,568	14.64	2,113,063	391,091	18.5

Source: *Bulletin Mensuel du Commerce Extérieur*.

Table 4.—U.S. Exports to Belgium by Commodity Groups and Principal Commodities, 1958–61

[Quantity in units indicated: value in million dollars]

Commodity	Quantity				Value			
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1958	1959	1960	1961
Total exports, including reexports					331.6	350.9	435.8	420.4
Total exports, U.S. merchandise					325.6	338.9	423.3	408.3
Foodstuffs					72.3	89.0	75.2	77.6
Grains and preparations					53.5	66.9	54.7	53.4
Barley	1,000 bushels	15,823	10,509	4,863	2,326	16.6	12.1	5.2	2.1
Corn except seed	do	9,595	14,655	12,852	16,863	12.1	18.4	16.3	11.2
Grain sorghum	do	12,092	22,747	21,043	16,028	13.9	25.5	23.5	17.9
Oats	do	6,895	2,960	1,968	1,165	3.9	2.1	1.5	.9
Wheat	do	3,387	3,415	4,081	6,611	5.3	5.6	6.8	12.6
Fodders and feeds						1.0	4.2	3.9	3.4
Oilcake and oilcake meal	1,000 s. tons	23	53	51	56.7	1.7	3.3	3.1	3.5
Vegetables, fruits and preparations						13.3	11.4	10.2	11.7
Fresh fruits	million lbs	67	59	40	64	5.4	4.0	2.8	4.9
Oranges and tangerines	do	43	53	35	51	3.7	3.5	2.4	2.8
Canned fruits	do	35	26	27	36	4.8	4.4	4.3	3.9
Vegetable products, inedible						30.4	38.0	42.4	38.1
Rubber and manufactures						8.4	11.9	13.0	11.4
Synthetic rubbers						7.1	10.0	10.1	8.7
Soybeans, except canned	1,000 bushels	3,199	3,486	5,202	4,010	7.3	7.9	11.8	10.3
Flaxseed	do	279	886	707	502	.9	2.2	2.2	1.7
Tobacco, unmanufactured	1,000 lbs	14,411	20,145	18,580	17,257	6.6	10.4	9.2	8.3
Cigarettes	millions	1,030	890	933	1,127	4.7	4.1	4.3	5.2
Textile fibers and manufactures						21.4	20.0	50.1	35.3
Raw cotton, except linters	1,000 bales	93	84	266	131	12.2	8.4	34.5	18.6
Manmade fibers and yarns	1,000 lbs	1,373	1,588	3,509	3,051	1.7	1.9	4.5	4.2
Other textile materials, waste, and rags						3.4	4.0	4.6	3.6
Fabrics, apparel, and related manufactures						4.1	5.7	6.5	8.9
Fabrics						1.0	4.2	4.8	6.0
Wood and paper						4.4	5.1	8.1	8.3
Paper, products and manufactures						2.1	2.5	3.2	3.6
Nonmetallic minerals						39.6	26.2	28.9	30.3
Coal bituminous	1,000 s. tons	2,280	1,151	1,106	905	22.5	11.0	10.2	8.0
Petroleum products						11.1	9.4	9.9	12.0
Lubricating oils	1,000 bbls	682	720	783	916	7.2	7.3	8.3	9.6
Metals and manufactures						11.8	10.4	20.3	19.4
Iron and steel mill products	1,000 s. tons	15	12	27	14	3.4	2.8	6.0	3.7
Metal manufactures						3.1	3.4	3.9	4.6
Nonferrous ores, scrap and metals						2.3	2.3	8.3	9.6
Machinery and vehicles						71.4	70.3	109.2	109.6
Machinery total						38.0	43.4	60.0	81.0
Electric machinery and apparatus						8.7	12.4	10.6	11.5
Radio, television and electronic equipment						2.0	4.1	2.9	2.6
Industrial machinery						24.1	26.0	43.6	58.5
Power-generating machinery						3.1	4.5	8.6	9.9
Construction, excavating and mining machinery						4.1	5.0	8.4	12.2
Metalworking machinery and machine tools						3.1	2.8	5.4	11.3
Textile, sewing and shoe machinery						4.4	5.4	6.7	8.0
Miscellaneous industrial machinery						9.0	8.3	14.4	17.2
Office machines and parts						3.0	2.3	2.5	3.5
Agricultural machines and tractors						1.7	1.9	2.5	4.4
Automobiles, parts and accessories						24.2	21.1	27.1	27.2
Trucks, buses and chassis	1,000	3	1	1	1	2.9	2.8	2.8	1.7
Passenger cars and chassis	do	9	7	10	10	16.4	12.8	16.6	16.8
Aircraft, parts and accessories						8.6	5.4	21.7	.333
Chemicals and related products						55.7	58.9	68.0	66.5
Coal tar products						5.8	3.7	8.4	8.4
Medicinal and pharmaceutical preparations						10.1	12.4	12.5	15.1
Chemical specialties						17.3	22.0	24.4	24.7
Plastics and resin materials						12.3	16.5	17.8	15.7
Industrial chemicals						18.8	16.6	19.0	15.5
Alcohols						13.1	12.1	10.5	7.3
Photographic and projection goods						2.7	2.3	3.4	3.7
Scientific and professional instruments, apparatus, and supplies						1.2	1.6	1.4	2.0
Phonographs, records, blanks and parts						3.5	3.5	3.4	3.1

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 5.—Belgium-Luxembourg: Imports by Principal Country of Origin, 1960-61

Country of origin	1960		1961	
	Value, in million francs	Percent of total	Value, in million francs	Percent of total
Total imports	197,854	100.0	210,952	100.0
Germany, Fed. Rep. of	33,701	17.0	37,637	17.8
Netherlands	29,390	14.9	32,299	15.3
France	26,898	13.6	31,051	14.7
Italy	4,701	2.4	5,784	2.7
Total Common Market	*94,690*	*47.9*	*106,771*	*50.6*
United States	19,552	9.9	18,740	8.9
United Kingdom	14,583	7.4	15,912	7.5
Republic of the Congo	13,214	6.7	11,336	5.4
Sweden	5,976	3.0	6,569	3.1
Switzerland	3,577	1.8	3,387	1.6
Australia	2,754	1.4	2,834	1.3
Canada	2,394	1.2	2,675	1.3
Iran	2,190	1.1	2,558	1.2
Iraq	2,377	1.2	2,394	1.1
Argentina	2,279	1.2	2,390	1.1
Finland	1,905	1.0	2,170	1.0
Union of South Africa	1,864	0.9	1,973	0.9
All others	30,499	15.4	31,243	14.8

Source: *Bulletin Mensuel du Commerce Extérieur.*

Table 6.—Belgium-Luxembourg: Balance of Trade and Percentage of Coverage, 1950–60

Year	Imports	Exports	Trade balance [favorable (+) unfavorable (−)]	Percentage of coverage
1950	97,835	82,825	−15,010	84.65
1951	127,517	132,671	+5,154	104.04
1952	123,114	122,703	−411	99.66
1953	121,514	113,444	−8,070	93.35
1954	127,863	115,690	−12,173	90.47
1955	142,202	138,961	−3,241	97.72
1956	163,624	158,124	−5,500	96.63
1957	171,622	159,302	−12,320	92.82
1958	156,447	152,287	−4,160	97.34
1959	172,090	164,757	−7,333	95.73
1960	197,854	188,772	−9,082	95.40
1961	210,952	196,220	−14,732	93.02

Source: *Bulletin Mensuel du Commerce Extérieur.*

Table 7.—Total Installment Sales by Commodity, Time Period, and Value During First Half of 1962

Commodity	Number of contracts by time period			Total number of contracts	Down payments (in 1,000 francs)	Total credit accorded (in 1,000 francs)
	3 to 12 months	13 to 24 months	25 months and over			
Trucks, delivery vans, autobuses, heavy transport equipment:						
New	680	1,282	1,783	3,745	183,190	474,673
Used	262	643	300	1,205	30,074	75,557
Agricultural tractors and equipment, livestock	1,276	1,094	446	2,816	33,435	88,959
Automobiles:						
New	5,499	10,558	14,478	30,535	1,051,268	1,626,259
Used	2,893	11,134	1,287	15,314	198,357	410,678
Motorcycles, scooters, moto-bikes, and bicycles	8,500	7,176	137	15,813	44,339	122,264
Textiles, furs, clothing	321,192	16,175	205	337,572	48,922	293,511
Books	8,439	10,623	2,307	21,369	5,569	45,325
Professional equipment, other than above (for commerce, crafts, industry, and liberal professions)	3,106	2,955	1,981	8,042	118,484	423,031
Household goods, articles for personal use not elsewhere specified	180,152	97,767	22,656	300,575	444,346	1,688,975
Services (travel, motor vehicle repairs)	2,844	1,886	418	5,148	9,904	40,289
Total	534,843	161,293	45,998	742,134	2,167,888	5,289,521

Source: *Bulletin de Statistique*, National Institute of Statistics.

Table 8.—Commodity Composition of Total Credits Accorded by Financers, January-June 1962

[In percentages]

Commodity	Financed directly by seller	Financed by acceptance of the contract of sale		Total
		Banks	Financing or private organizations	
Trucks, delivery vans, autobuses, heavy transport equipment:				
New	9.0	12.6	5.8	9.0
Used	0.5	2.4	1.5	1.4
Agricultural tractors and equipment, livestock	1.3	3.1	0.7	1.7
Automobiles:				
New	34.5	41.3	18.2	30.7
Used	3.6	10.1	9.5	7.8
Motorcycles, scooters, moto-bikes, bicycles	0.6	1.4	4.6	2.3
Textiles, furs, clothing	12.8	0.2	3.6	5.5
Books	2.6			0.9
Professional equipment other than above (for commerce, crafts, industry, and liberal professions)	5.0	14.1	5.5	8.0
Household goods; articles for personal use not elsewhere specified	30.0	14.5	48.8	31.9
Services (travel, motor vehicle repairs)	0.1	0.3	1.8	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: *Bulletin de Statistique*, National Institute of Statistics.

Table 9.—Proportion of Credit Accorded by Financers by Commodity Group, January-June 1962

[In percentages]

Commodity	Financed directly by seller	Financed by acceptance of the contract of sale		Total
		Banks	Financing or private organizations	
Trucks, delivery vans, autobuses, heavy transport equipment:				
New	32.8	43.7	23.5	100
Used	11.2	51.5	37.3	100
Agricultural tractors and equipment, livestock	26.4	57.5	16.1	100
Automobiles:				
New	36.7	41.9	21.4	100
Used	15.3	40.5	44.2	100
Motorcycles, scooters, moto-bikes, bicycles	9.1	18.7	72.2	100
Textiles, furs, clothing	75.8	1.0	23.2	100
Books	99.4		0.6	100
Professional equipment other than above (for commerce, crafts, industry, and liberal professions)	20.3	55.0	24.7	100
Household goods, articles for personal use not elsewhere specified	30.6	14.2	55.2	100
Services (travel, motor vehicle repairs)	5.2	11.4	83.4	100
Total	32.7	31.2	36.1	100

Source: *Bulletin de Statistique*, National Institute of Statistics.

Table 10.—Number of Registered Radios and Television Sets, 1955–61

Year	Household radio sets	Automobile radios	Portable radios	Total	Television sets
1955	1,871,408	117,893	6,714	1,996,015	(1)
1956	1,947,825	134,759	8,483	2,091,067	(1)
1957	2,007,429	161,439	12,654	2,181,522	(1)
1958	2,077,473	177,061	20,070	2,274,604	223,168
1959	2,108,268	194,014	41,353	2,343,635	392,355
1960	2,140,543	202,462	114,973	2,457,978	617,834
1961	2,171,085	218,086	223,679	2,612,850	820,709

[1] Not available.

Source: *Bulletin de Statistique*, National Institute of Statistics.

APPENDIX C

Selected Sources of Additional Information

OFFICIAL BELGIAN PUBLICATIONS

Annuaire Statistique (*Statistical Annual*). Annual publication of the National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Brussels. Latest issue is for year 1961.

Bulletin de Statistique (*Statistical Bulletin*). Issued monthly by the National Institute of Statistics, Brussels.

L'Economie Belge en 19—(*The Belgian Economy*). An annual report on the economy published by the General Direction of Studies and Documentation, Ministry of Economy Affairs, Brussels.

Bulletin Mensuel de la Directien Général des Etudes et de la Documentation (*Monthly Bulletin*). Issued by the General Direction of Studies and Documentation, Brussels. The December issue is a special number with a detailed review of the economy.

Bulletin Mensuel du Commerce Extérieur de l'Union Economique Belgo-Luxembourgeoise (*Monthly Bulletin of the Foreign Commerce of the Belgian-Luxembourg Economic Union*). Cumulative monthly foreign trade data prepared by the National Institute of Statistics, Brussels.

Business Memo from Belgium. A monthly newsletter on highlights of industry, commerce and finance by the Belgian Industrial Information Service, Belgian Consulate General, New York.

Belgium—Information. Monthly economic bulletin from the Belgian Foreign Trade Office, Brussels.

OTHER GENERAL SOURCES

Bulletin d'Information et de Documentation (*Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Belgium*). Contains factual economic articles and detailed statistical tables. Prepared by the Department of Studies and Documentation of the National Bank, Brussels.

Annual Report. General economic review and review of the activities of the Belgian Federation of Industries, Brussels.

Industrie (*Industry*). Monthly periodical of the Belgian Federation of Industries, Brussels, covering economic, industrial, and a wide range of other subjects, and tending to be scholarly in its approach.

Recherches Economique de Louvain (*Economic Researches of Louvain*). Review published eight times a year by the Institute for Economic, Social and Political Research, Catholic University of Louvain, Louvain.

Belgian Trade Review. Published monthly by the Belgian Chamber of Commerce in the United States, New York.

Commerce. Review of the American Chamber of Commerce in Belgium, Brussels.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PUBLICATIONS [1]

Directory of Foreign Advertising Agencies and Marketing Research Organizations. Lists advertising agencies and marketing research organizations. 1959. 135 pages. 45 cents.

Sources of Credit Information on Foreign Firms. A guide to the principal sources of foreign credit information in the United States and abroad. 1958. 84 pages. 30 cents.

[1] Available from U.S. Department of Commerce Field Offices or from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. Enclose check or money order payable to the Superintendent of Documents.

Selling Around the World—How Commerce Helps. A description of Commerce services to the international business community. 1963. 26 pp. Free.

What You Should Know About EXPORTING. A How-To-Get-Started Handbook designed to be a basic reference for the American businessman interested in opening profitable overseas markets for his products. 1962. 38 pages. 25 cents.

Trade Lists. Most of these lists furnish, for a particular country, names and addresses of foreign firms (of importers and dealers or of manufacturers and exporters, as the case may be), classified by commodity; others are listings of professional groups, institutions, and service organizations by country. The lists include names and addresses of the principal firms engaging in a specified commodity trade or names and addresses of service or professional groups, etc., with information on the relative size, type of operation, products handled, and sales territory. They also provide a summary of general conditions governing trade in specified products. For some of the smaller countries simple listings of businessmen, often with indication of the commodities handled, are furnished. $1 per list (individual-commodity list, professional group list, businessmen's list, etc.) per country.

Basic Data on the Economy of Belgium. World Trade Information Service, part 1, No. 61–64. 12 pp. August 1961. 15 cents.

Economic Developments in Belgium, 1961. World Trade Information Service, part 1, No. 62–21. 8 pp. May 1962. 15 cents.

Establishing a Business in Belgium. World Trade Information Service, part 1, No. 60–39. 11 pp. August 1960. 10 cents.

Import Tariff System of Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg. Overseas Business Report, OBR–63–25. 2 pp. January 1963. 15 cents.

Licensing and Exchange Controls, Belgium-Luxembourg. World Trade Information Service, part 2, No. 61–89. 4 pp. November 1961. 10 cents.

Living Conditions in Belgium. World Trade Information Service, part 2, No. 61–13. 7 pp. March 1961. 10 cents.

Marking and Labeling Requirements of Belgium. World Trade Information Service, part 2, No. 62–60. 2 pp. October 1962. 10 cents.

Pharmaceutical Regulations of Belgium. World Trade Information Service, part 2, No. 61–74. 3 pp. November 1961. 10 cents.

Preparing Shipments to Belgium-Luxembourg. Part 2, No. 60–29. 6 pp. July 1960. 10 cents.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1963 O—675484